E136

Liberty

APRIL 21, 1945

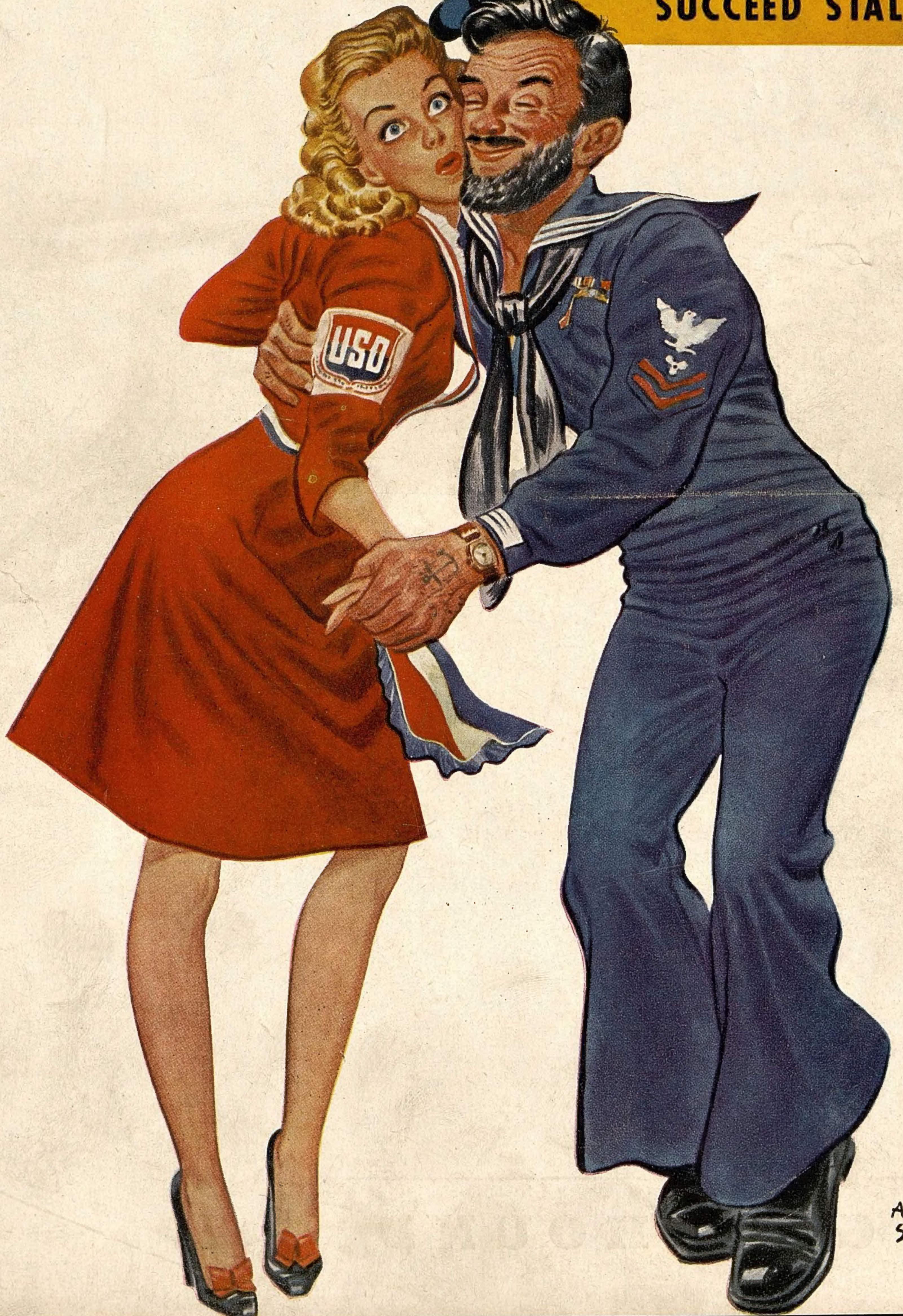
10c

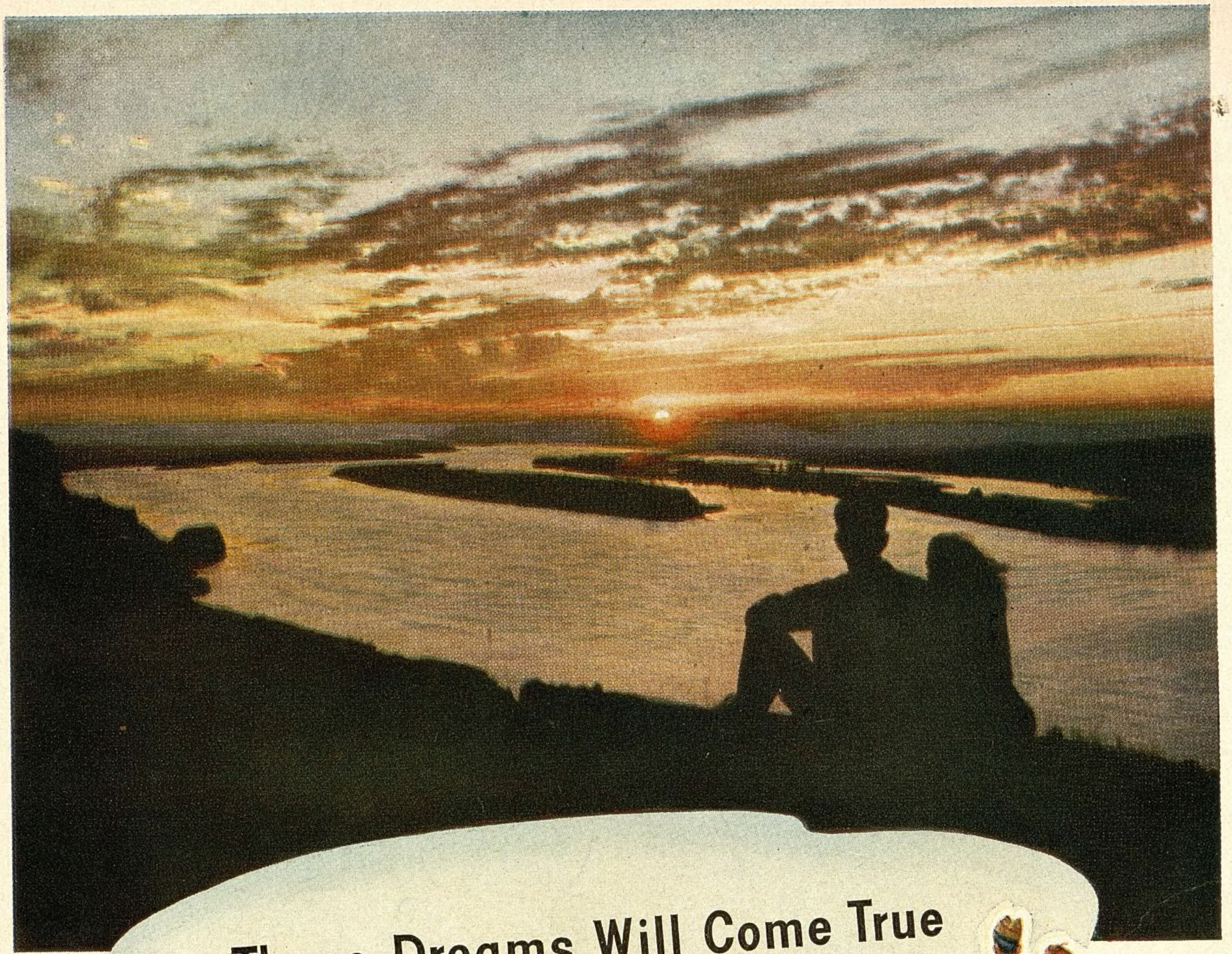
Book:

THEY DREAM OF HOME

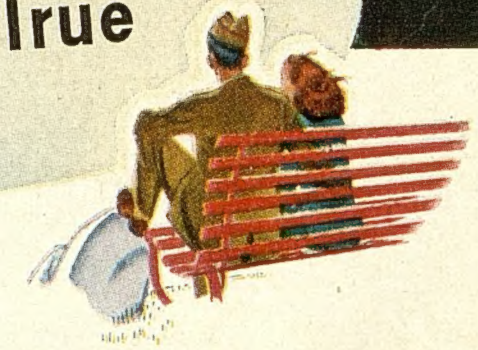
A Moving Story of Ex-G.I.s

THE MAN WHO WILL SUCCEED STALIN


USO
ARTHUR
SMITH



These Dreams Will Come True



—WHEN *Highways are Happy ways* AGAIN

When a fellow puts his uniform in mothballs and slips on those loose, easy civvies . . . that's comfort.

When he and the lady he loves discover a velvet bank overlooking a river that runs all silver in the sunset—a place to dream those old happy dreams . . . *that's Heaven!*

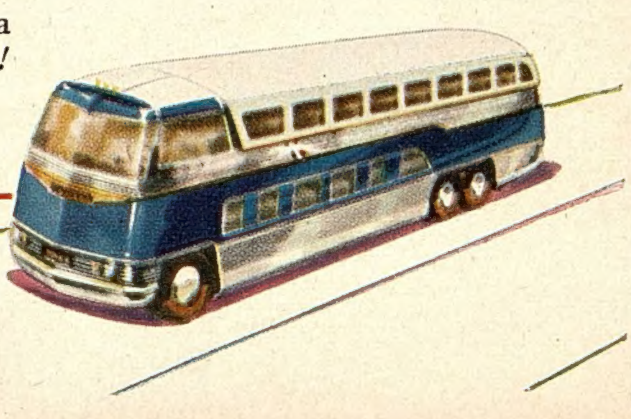
Hard months of war may lie ahead but, with final victory, Greyhound intends to help make a lot of those dreams come true for a lot of fighters—both in and out of uniform.

Today it must be all hard work and sacrifice if we're to win the last tough battle.

Then, in a better tomorrow, the great highways of America will re-introduce us all to the land we love. *Let's speed that day!*

Super-Coaches Like This One

will roll along the highways of America in the good days to come. Greyhound will again pioneer in their design and operation—and that means tops in comfort, scenic enjoyment.



GREYHOUND

For Him

For him, G. I. Joe—or maybe he's a brother in the Navy, in some branch of the air forces, the Signal Corps, or the Marines, or what have you. For every man that's in it, and above all for every man who *was* in it up to the supreme moment. That's what our job is, here on the home front.

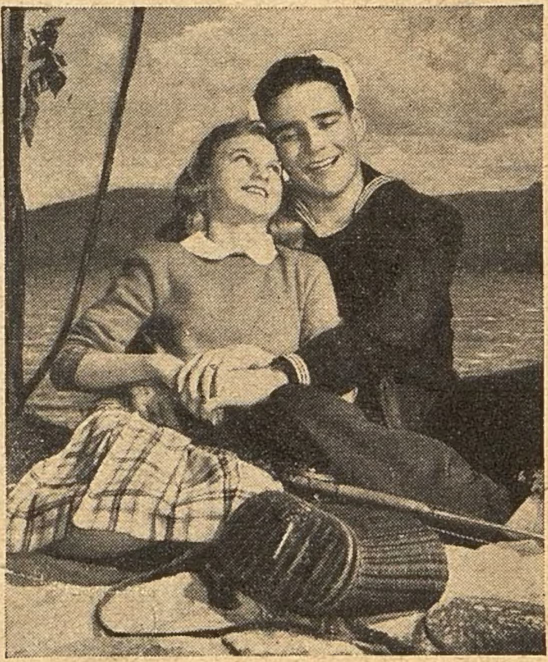
To keep producing the supplies, so that *he* will have that ship, that plane, that curtain of protective artillery, that bullet.

War industry needs men. It needs every man it can get who is not bearing arms. If you are not now in essential industry, and are capable of doing a war-work job, go to the nearest United States Employment Service office. . . . For him.

BETHLEHEM STEEL

Steel, Manufacturing and Fabricating Plants . . . Bethlehem, Steelton, Williamsport, Johnstown, Lebanon, Pottstown, Rankin, Leetsdale, Pa. . . . Buffalo, Lackawanna, N. Y. . . . Sparrows Point, Md. . . . Chicago, Ill. . . . Tulsa, Okla. . . . Corsicana, Tex. . . . South San Francisco, Los Angeles, Alameda, Calif. . . . Seattle, Wash. *Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Yards* . . . Quincy, Hingham, East Boston, Mass. . . . Staten Island, Brooklyn, N. Y. . . . Hoboken, N. J. . . . Baltimore, Sparrows Point, Md. . . . San Francisco, Alameda, San Pedro, Calif.

When he
closes up
like this...


Instead of
closing in
like this...

TRY THIS

MORAL: ***Everybody's breath offends sometimes. Let Life Savers sweeten and freshen your breath—after eating, drinking, and smoking.***

PEP-O-MINT
LIFE SAVERS

All out of your favorite Life Savers? That means they're all *in* the pockets of men in the Armed Services. We know you won't complain. Just try other flavor Life Savers—you'll enjoy 'em all!

In This Week's Liberty

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★ ARTICLES

The Man Who Will Succeed Stalin, *William van Narvig*
I'm Proud to Belong, *Major General A. D. Bruce* ....
Two Likable Lads Loaded with Laughs, *Ted Shane* .....
Ho-Hum in Hawaii, *Lieutenant Robert C. Ruark, U.S.N.R.*
Tailor-made Vegetables, *Priscilla Jaquith* ....

★ FICTION

The River, *Neill C. Wilson* ....
The Lovers—Short Short, *Richard G. Hubler* ....
Brains vs. Bronski, *Mary Leslie Harrison* ....
Juan Becomes a Banker, *Bill Gulick* ....

★ BOOK CONDENSATION

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Cover: Eager Beaver
Painted by Arthur Smith

PUBLISHED BY LIBERTY MAGAZINE, INC.

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Liberty, April 21, 1945. Vol. 22, No. 16. Published weekly by Liberty Magazine, In 205 East 42d Street, New York 17, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter June 28, 192 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Ten cents copy. Subscription price $3.50 a year in the United States and possessions, $4.50 a year in Cuba, Mexico, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Spain and possessions, and Central and South American countries, excepting British Honduras, British, Dutch, and French Guiana. All other countries $5.50 a year. In entering a new or renewal subscription or change of address, please allow at least forty-five (45) days for Liberty to reach you. Copyright, 1945, by Liberty Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. Registered at Stationers' Hall, Great Britain. Registro Nacional de la Propieda Intelectual. All rights reserved.

Room Service

As you might suspect, our latest picture, HOTEL BERLIN, is about a hotel in Berlin today, and the revolting shenanigens of its more unsavory guests as their vultures come home to roost.

As you might *not* suspect, HOTEL BERLIN was planned as a Warner Bros. picture more than two years ago, when war-clouds loomed blackest . . . for we shared the faith of millions that freedom *must* triumph.

* * *

There's a further reason why, from where we sit, HOTEL BERLIN is a very special entertainment.

For it's the sequel, in a sense, to a picture we made *more than six years ago.*

That picture, "Confessions of a Nazi Spy", caused a lot of talk . . . some of it to the effect that we were seeing things under democracy's bed. (As we recall, some folks even said, "Pooh, pooh!").

* * *

HOTEL BERLIN shows, in unforgettably dramatic scenes, what finally happens to a nation that sets out to degrade and destroy mankind . . . by lies or Luftwaffe, by poison-propaganda or panzers.

HOTEL BERLIN shows, too, that Warner Bros. intend to maintain the leadership established by "Nazi Spy" and so many other splendid motion pictures . . . leadership in what The New York Times called *"combining good picture-making with good citizenship"*.

VICKI BAUM's Bestseller

Hotel Berlin

starring

FAYE EMERSON · HELMUT DANTINE
RAYMOND MASSEY · ANDREA KING
PETER LORRE · ALAN HALE
GEORGE COULOURIS

Directed by PETER GODFREY
Produced by LOUIS F. EDELMAN

Screen Play by Jo Pagano & Alvah Bessie • Music by Franz Waxman

WARNER BROS.
JACK L. WARNER, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Other current Warner Bros. productions:
GOD IS MY CO-PILOT • THE HORN BLOWS AT MIDNIGHT • OBJECTIVE BURMA • ROUGHLY SPEAKING • TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT

PIPE-SMOKERS:
Taste the flavor and admire the beauty of these new **MONTEREY PIPES** made of Mission Briar from California

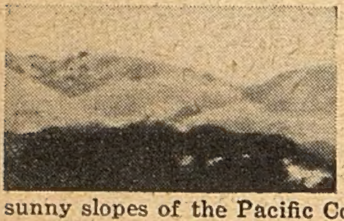
Giant Mission Briar Burls

MONTEREY
Specimen Grain
$5
(also Select Grain $3.50)

MISSION BRIAR

A GIANT GROWTH THAT FORMS ABOVE THE GROUND —MELLOW WITH AGE

MONTEREY Pipes from California, made of Mission Briar, smoke with a special leisurely sweetness, because these big burl-growths have peculiar advantages (1) mellow with age (2) tempered by weather (3) of unusual soundness (4) with a beautiful grain which adds to the fine smoking-quality. Ask for MONTEREY PIPES, only ones made of MISSION BRIAR, at your dealer's, Select Grain $3.50, Specimen Grain $5.



The Mission Country of California where Mission Briar grows on the sunny slopes of the Pacific Coast. Next advertisement will show the "Topping" operation.

Kaufmann Bros. & Bondy, Inc., 630 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 20, N.Y.

★ VOX POP ★

"The Voice of the People"

A MODEL FOR WOMEN

OAKLAND, OREG.—I was very much impressed by the picture of Princess Elizabeth illustrating The Girl Who Will Be Queen, by Hettie Grimstead and Molly Castle (March 10). To see, for a change, a face that is so attractive is refreshing indeed. We can only hope that American girlhood will model their appearance from this example of beautiful purity and modesty to replace their present Hollywood-inspired sensuality. Irrespective of my profound conviction that the price we are paying for British friendship is much too great, yet in the realms of morality and virtue we can very profitably learn from them.—*Herman R. Larson.*

HEARTFELT PRAISE

WHEELING, W. VA.—Congratulations on the article by Philip Harkins, Heart Surgery: Now It Can Be Done (March 3).

It was very encouraging to read that so much is being accomplished along these lines. I found the article especially interesting, since I was operated on for "stone heart" myself six months ago by one of the surgeons mentioned, Dr. Claude S. Beck at Lakeside Hospital in Cleveland.

I am now in fine shape, but as I read of the procedure in preparation for the operation, I recalled my own case vividly. I shall never forget what I owe to Dr. Beck and the medical profession.—*George E. Dornon.*

ONE CRASH WAS FATAL

TRACY, CALIF.—My high commendations on a week-after-week fine magazine. Your book condensations and succinct current news articles are particularly informative and worth while.

A check mark in your margin of error, however, is the statement in Wayne Parrish's November 25 On the Beam. The author says that Twentynine Palms Air Academy had no fatal accidents. Guy Heckman crashed fatally in the early part of February, 1944, on a solo flight a few days before he was due to graduate. I know. We were there.—*Mrs. Allan Faries.*

NISEI AT ANZIO

NORFOLK, VA.—I read in February 10 Vox Pop about an American Legion post commander who crossed the names of sixteen Japanese-American G. I.s off a war memorial in Oregon.

My answer to that commander is this:

The LST I was on carried those boys to the Anzio beachhead and took out the few who were still left after relief came. Not many came out. Those of us who were there consider those boys 100-per-cent American, and that's more than I can say for the so-called Americans like that commander whom we're supposed to be fighting for.

Incidentally, a great portion of the mer awards and Purple Heart awards thos Nisei soldiers won was sent to thei mothers, wives, and sweethearts. The soldiers themselves didn't live to receiv them.

If that Oregon action represents th policy of the American Legion, then a lo of us who've seen action don't want an part of the Legion.—*S. R. K. G. M. 2/c.*

You will be happy to know that the names o those Japanese-American G. I.s are going back on the war memorial. The National Commande of the American Legion ordered the names restored, and the Oregon post has agreed to do so —VOX POP EDITOR.

STEERED TO THE WRONG SCHOOL

ERIE, PA.—In Sylvan Lebow's article, Education Against Death (February 24), you have a picture of the steerometer tests of driving skill taken at East High School, Erie, Pennsylvania, instead of at Strong Vincent High School as is stated beneath that picture.

Our East High School patrons would appreciate the correction of this.—*W. E. Coon, Principal.*

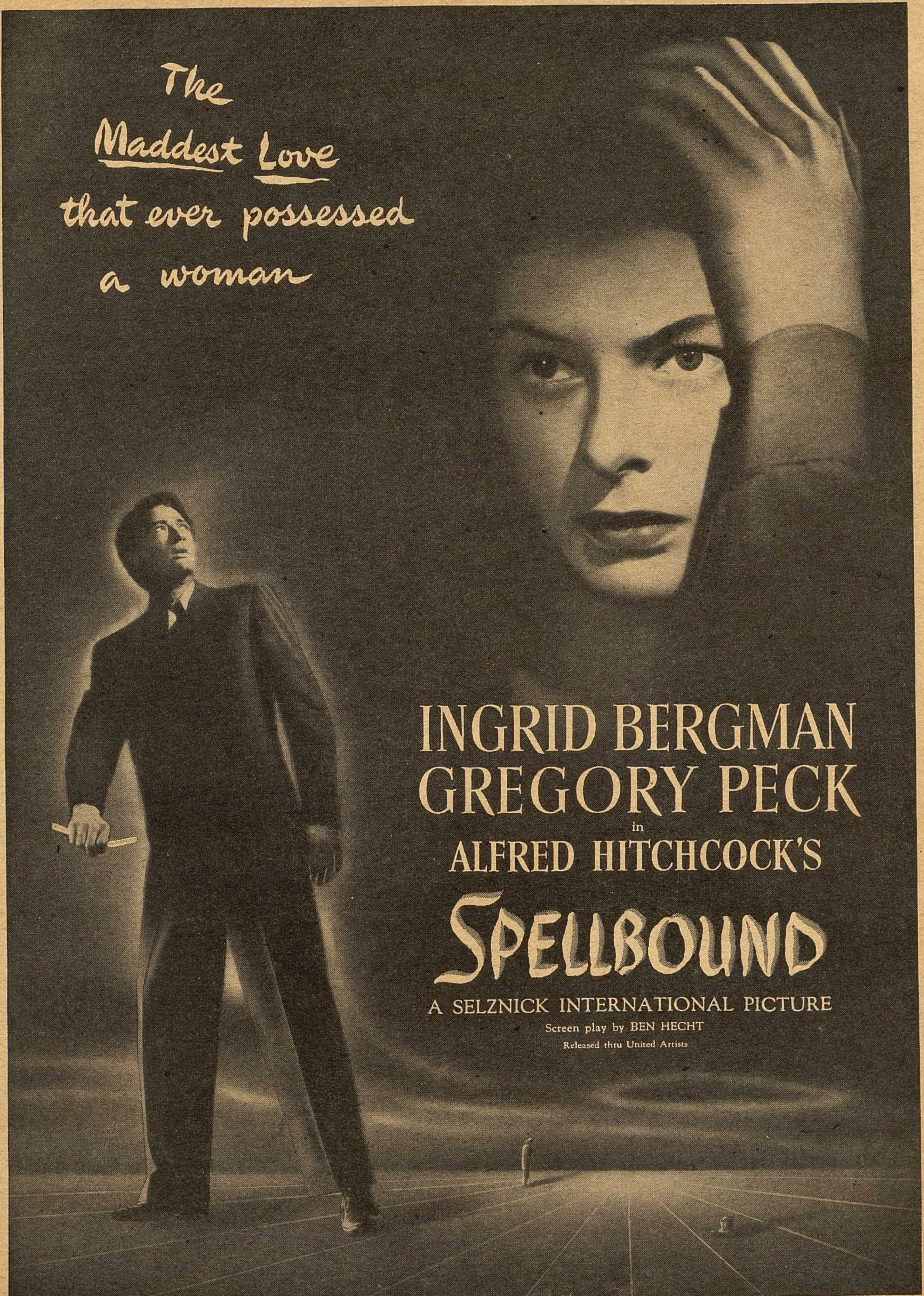
A G. I. LOOKS AT THE VETERAN

APO, NEW YORK—I was fortunate enough to secure a copy of Liberty, January 20, which included a book condensation, The Veteran Comes Back, by Willard Waller. Since it concerned the veteran, I began to read it. When I arrived at the point where an enlisted man wrote home and told his wife he preferred staying in camp to going home, I stopped. I turned back and looked at the introduction. No, it did not describe the book as a humorous novel.

NOW PLAYING
THE FAMILY, IN SOLDIER'S RETURN

I read on. It had never occurred to me before that I, an average soldier, could never "quite recapture my former self"; that I now face the dreaded future of no longer being able to deal with people with wills of their own. At that point in the condensation I said to myself, "Here is where I get off." How one simple-minded sociologist can make a statement like that, with so little proof and actual knowledge of what conditions do exist in the minds of so many of us, is beyond my understanding.

(Continued on page 8)


The
Maddest Love
that ever possessed
a woman

INGRID BERGMAN
GREGORY PECK
in
ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S

SPELLBOUND

A SELZNICK INTERNATIONAL PICTURE
Screen play by BEN HECHT
Released thru United Artists

If you want the Best in Rum...
Rely on Riondo
the FINEST RUM from PUERTO RICO
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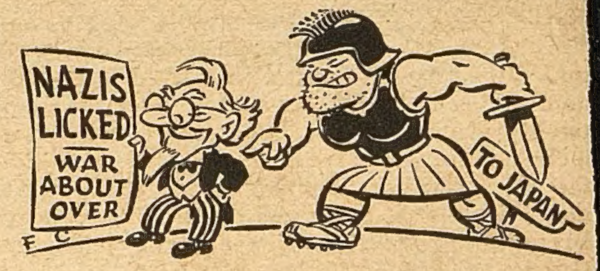
(*Continued from page 6*)

If reports and studies are to be mad let them be made by those who can judg not imagine. If books are to be publishe let them be fair. Above all, stop teachi the folks at home to be pretenders, to pla the roles of perfect receptionists. It wi be a confusing world to come home to, those who await us have turned into actor outgrowths of books such as The Vetera Comes Back.—*Lt. J. D. H.*

FICTION THAT MAY BECOME FACT

FRANCE—Corey Ford's short short, It' Tomorrow Here (January 27) may be fiction now, but it can turn out to be a rea news story soon. I wish it could be published in every paper in the country, jus



to remind the people back home that the war is not over when Germany is licked.

Most men over here know that we will have to fight the Japs after this part of the war is over. We hope that the folks at home realize that too.—*Sgt. Herbert Moyer.*

WORK FOR ALL; LESS WORK FOR ONE

BATON ROUGE, LA.—I have just read Can We Avoid Another Depression? by Sylvia F. Porter (March 3). Your circulation is broad, your influence great, and should you sponsor the formula to avoid all depressions, you'd render a real service to us all.

Universal employment is the key to national prosperity, and it is easily attainable with this formula: "Never reduce the individual's hours of pay but reduce his hours of production."

In 1845, for example, 1,000 men working fourteen hours a day at $1.50 a day produced a given amount of goods. In the next hundred years new methods, inventions, and mechanical achievements made it possible for the employer to do one of two things: dismiss 500 men, work the remaining 500 fourteen hours a day and produce the same amount of goods, or retain the 1,000, work them seven hours a day and produce the same amount of goods. The universal practice has been to dismiss the 500. These men then cease to consume for cash and consume out of tax money which is extracted from the producing element and given as a dole where it should have been given as wages. Those 500 multiplied by enough made the 15,000,000 unemployed we had in 1932. The formula I propose would have avoided it.—*J. H. Inman.*

SAFETY FIRST

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—Sylvan Lebow's article is a swell job and a real contribution to the cause of highway safety.

My experience as Secretary of Revenue, which included supervision of motor vehicles and safety, convinced me that only by a campaign such as you advocate can there be a reduction in the slaughter on the highways of America.—*Harry E. Kalodner.*

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

A FIGHTING GENERAL WRITES OF GUAM

SINCE 1917, when he was commissioned in the Regular Army, Andrew D. Bruce has carved out a gilt-edged military career. Fighting in France in World War I, he collected the Distinguished Service Cross, the Purple Heart, the French Legion of Merit, and the Croix de Guerre with Gold Star. Student and teacher at Army schools for the next twenty-odd years, he piled up the superior technical knowledge which ultimately won him the Distinguished Service Medal in 1944. A major general in command of the 77th Infantry Division overseas, he tells of their action on Guam in I'M PROUD TO BELONG.

AUTHOR IN THE MARINES

A GRADUATE of Swarthmore in 1934, Richard G. Hubler, author of THE LOVERS, has doubled in brass for everything from an actor to a detective, but writing is his serious business. With six months' travel over most of Europe sandwiched into 1937, he was in and out of Newsweek from 1935-39 as assistant foreign and national affairs editor; radio, education, and religion editor. Assistant night city editor on the newspaper PM in 1940, he followed that with a year in Hollywood. Currently a Marine captain (specialist, reserve), he has served in the South Pacific, and is now stationed here in the States.

NEXT WEEK

Liberty
PAPA WAS A PREACHER
COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING?

IT'S the question stumping the experts. Everybody's talking about it. SHOULD WE HAVE COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING? Here at last are the answers you've been waiting for—a discussion pro and con by two prominent Americans, President Charles Seymour of Yale and novelist Booth Tarkington. . . . OVER THE RIVER by Howard K. Smith gives you some vivid pages from a correspondent's diary that tell of the thrilling first hours of our great offensive over the Roer, which marked the beginning of Germany's end. . . . In Liberty's book condensation, PAPA WAS A PREACHER, Alyene Porter presents a lighthearted family chronicle of small-town life in prewar America—one of the spontaneous hits of the year.

FROM NOW ON—

Smoke this outstanding quality cigarette... Smoke it critically... Compare it with any other brand... See if you don't agree that ...from now on... it's Chelsea!

CHELSEA CIGARETTES
BLENDED BY EDGEWORTH

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GUY LOMBARDO
Blue Network
Mondays
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The BEST in Cigarettes—Blended by EDGEWORTH
A Heritage of Quality Since 1877

H·R

Holland
QUALITY SHOES
Racine

Pace-setters in Style — that's for sure! Mighty fine leathers — you bet! Foot-soothing comfort — oh, boy! Everything you want in a shoe — good looking, swell walking, long lasting. No ration stamp could ever be invested in a better cause. Make your next pair Holland-Racines!

H-R Shoes are sold by independent dealers who are professional hands at shoe fitting; your double assurance of foot happiness.

HOLLAND-RACINE SHOES, INC.

Quality first, since 1892

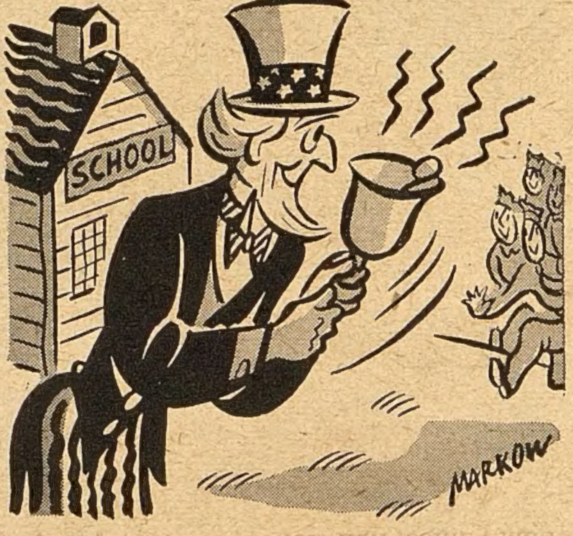
THIS MAN'S WAR

CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

I AM thirty-two years old, married, and have one child. In the Army I have been assigned to Plans and Training, and I find I am interested in drafting. Does the G. I. Bill of Rights entitle me to go to school for one year to study drafting? Also, will the government pay me $75 a month while in school?

Cpl. R. M. G., Columbia, S. C.

Every honorably discharged member of the armed forces with ninety days' active duty is entitled to a year's schooling under the G. I. Bill. Choose your school and your course of study, and the Veterans Administration will pay the cost of tuition, books, drafting instruments, and other necessary supplies, up to $250 a term. You will also be entitled to living expenses—while you are in school and as long as you haven't a full-time job—to the extent of $50 a month, or $75 if you have one or more dependents.



Schoolteacher

* * *

I'd like to have a little information about business loans under the G. I. Bill of Rights. (1) As I remember, the government plans to lend you only half of what you need to get started. (2) Three in our family now in the service intend to run a combined service station and repair garage when we get home. How would we go about getting a loan for this purpose?

Pfc. L. L., APO, San Francisco, Calif.

(1) The government doesn't lend you anything under the G. I. Bill, but it does make it easier for you to obtain a loan elsewhere by guaranteeing repayment of half of what you borrow to get started in business, up to a maximum guaranty of $2,000 a person. (2) To secure this guaranty of credit, you should make arrangements for the loan that you require with a bank, savings and loan association, or other recognized lending agency. Such institutions have the appropriate government forms, and they will make application for you to the Veterans Administration for guaranty of credit in the amount to which the three of you are entitled.

* * *

My husband is a private and has been overseas four months. I was informed that a serviceman's allotment is increased according to his rating on his being sent overseas. Is this true, and does it apply to all servicemen?

Mrs. V. B. J., Waukegan, Ill.

A soldier's family allowance remains the same when he goes overseas. Aren't you thinking of overseas pay, which is a 20-percent increase of base pay drawn by an enlisted man while serving outside the continental United States or in Alaska?

* * *

Under the G. I. Bill of Rights, how many years in college will I be eligible for if I have had two years' active service in the armed forces?

H. M. G., S. 2/c, FPO.,
San Francisco, Calif.

If you were under twenty-five years of age when inducted, and if you have had two years' active service at the time of your discharge, you will be eligible for three years of college education. All honorably discharged veterans with ninety days' active service are eligible for a calendar year at an approved educational institution. Those whose education was interrupted or who were under twenty-five at the time of their induction are also eligible for an additional period equal to that of their total active duty after September 16, 1940.

* * *

Is there a ribbon, other than the European ribbon, authorized for the Italian campaign?

A/S G. H., San Antonio, Texas.

No. Only the three campaign ribbons—European-African-Middle Eastern, American Theater (for service within the American theater of war, outside the continental United States), and Asiatic-Pacific—have been authorized for overseas service since Pearl Harbor.

* * *

What is a private's pay when he has been in the Army six years?

Mrs. A. G., Portland, Me.

It's $55 a month—base pay of $50 plus two "fogies," or 5-per-cent increases of base pay, one for each three years of service.

* * *

Has there been any recent ruling on Emergency Maternity and Infant Care regarding individuals who became parents before the effective date of the Care program?

(Capt.) E. G. O., Hot Springs, Ark.

The EMIC plan to provide emergency maternity and infant care to families of soldiers and sailors in the $50-, $54-, $66-, and $78-a-month pay groups was put into effect by an act of Congress in March, 1943, but no provision has been made to cover expenses of parenthood incurred before that.

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42d St., New York 17, N. Y.

BELL AIRCRAFT
AIR BELL

HELICOPTER is Everyman's dream. But whether you fly or drive in the days *after the war,* you'll find new, war-developed Sinclair Gasoline will always give you the most from your motor.

SINCLAIR H-C
THIS SALE
GALLONS
SINCLAIR
SINCLAIR
FOR USE AS A MOTOR FUEL ONLY
CONTAINS LEAD
(TETRAETHYL)
SINCLAIR H-C GASOLINE

YOUR SINCLAIR DEALER can help your present car last longer with expert servicing and Sinclair lubricants expertly refined to save wear. See him regularly.

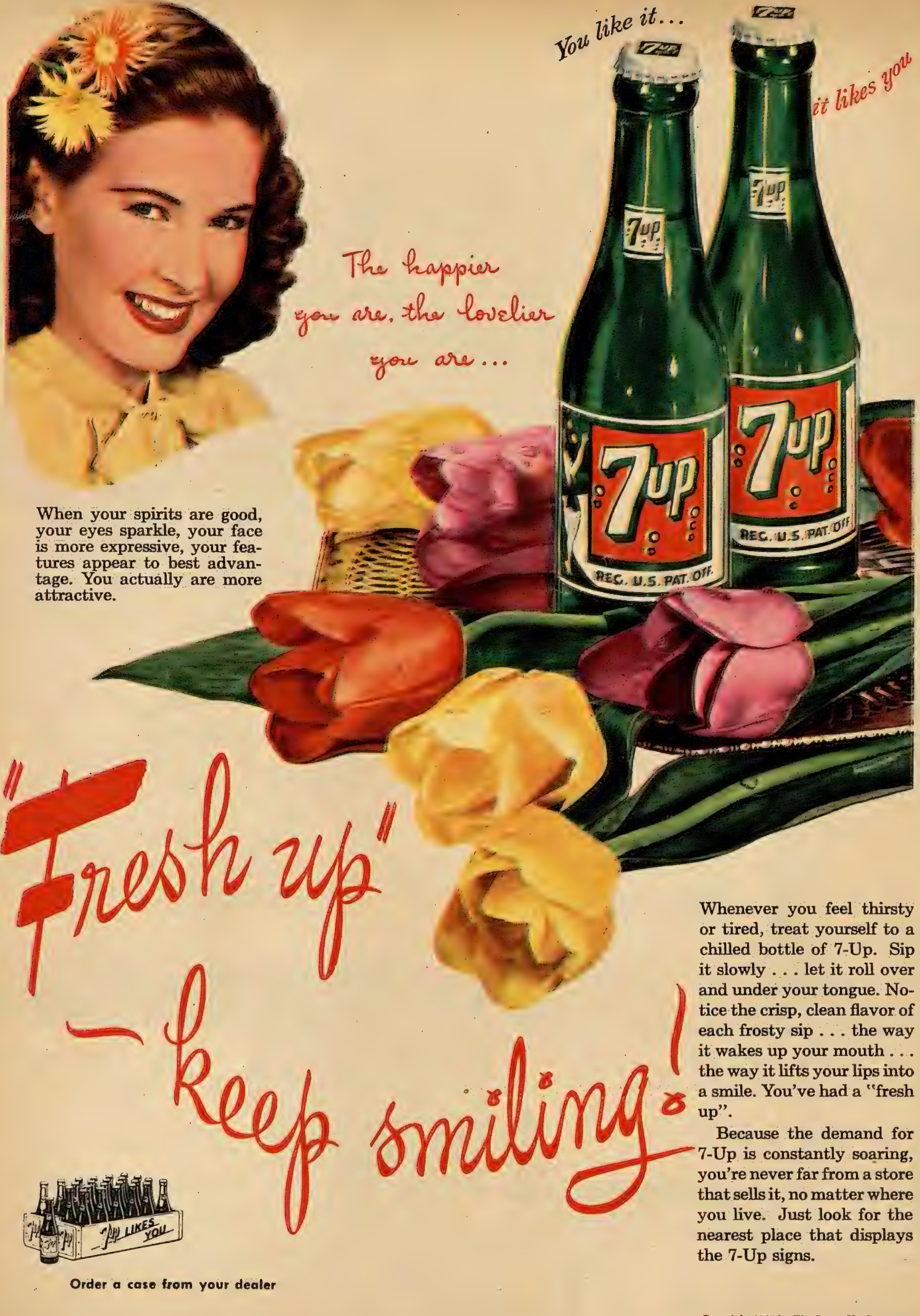
UNION PACIFIC OVERLAND
LA-4

STREAMLINER "City of Los Angeles", operating over lines of Chicago and North Western and Union Pacific, is one of many famous trains which rely on Sinclair lubricants. Lubricants of the same high quality are sold by Sinclair Dealers for your car.

SINCLAIR

Sinclair's Post-war Program

Better Products • Better Servic


You like it . . .
it likes you
The happier you are, the lovelier you are . . .
"Fresh up" – keep smiling!
7up
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
7up LIKES YOU

When your spirits are good, your eyes sparkle, your face is more expressive, your features appear to best advantage. You actually are more attractive.

Whenever you feel thirsty or tired, treat yourself to a chilled bottle of 7-Up. Sip it slowly . . . let it roll over and under your tongue. Notice the crisp, clean flavor of each frosty sip . . . the way it wakes up your mouth . . . the way it lifts your lips into a smile. You've had a "fresh up".

Because the demand for 7-Up is constantly soaring, you're never far from a store that sells it, no matter where you live. Just look for the nearest place that displays the 7-Up signs.

Order a case from your dealer

Copyright 1945 by The Seven-Up Company

Dropping rice to troops near the Salween, these 14th A. A. F. "kickers" are doing their stuff at treetop height—though at 7,500 feet above sea level.

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

"Kickers" Over Mountaintops

From the other side of the world comes a story of air supply that has hardly an equal in the entire war. It concerns the Y Force operations in the Salween campaign that began last year to reopen a land route to China.

The initial phase of the offensive was fought in the 12,000-foot Kaoli Kung mountain range, a spur of the Himalayas, with the troops fighting above the clouds on terrain that is accessible only by a few narrow steep trails which monsoon rains quickly turned into mires of deep, clinging mud.

Here was a tough campaign. The force had to be large enough to drive the Japs from their well-fortified mountain bastions. Yet supply routes were negligible. The airplane had to undertake the supply job.

Troops have been supplied by air many times in this world-wide war, but probably never for such a long period of time and against such terrific difficulties. Most of the area was entirely unmapped and the Kaoli Kung range is rugged almost beyond belief. There were few places where the planes could get low enough to drop supplies and still avoid hitting surrounding peaks. Some of the mountain peaks were never clear of clouds, and the Salween River fog rolled in every morning to blot out the river gorge.

But when the Chinese Expeditionary Force and their American advisers and assistants of Y Force crossed the turbulent Salween in May, 1944, the Air Dropping Detachment with its Troop Carrier Command planes were ready to supply the Army.

About four weeks after the battle began, 10,000 American raincoats were dropped to troops fighting in altitudes so high that the monsoon was turning to sleet and snow.

At one time or another, all of the necessities of war were dropped to the troops. Bullets and rice, the two prime essentials, were dropped in huge quantities. Even beans for the horses which furnish the only animal transportation in the trackless wastes have been delivered by air.

In one sector of the Y Force area, election ballots were dropped to Americans who were a month's pack trip from the nearest post office. Gasoline in fifty-five-gallon drums, hydrogen cylinders for flame throwers, half-pound blocks of TNT for demolition purposes, radios, and salt are among the items that were frequently dropped.

Three sizes of parachutes were used, the eighteen-foot Indian-cotton variety being used most. Small six-foot pigeon chutes were used for small items. Everything was dropped by parachute except rice, salt, beans, blankets, and uniforms. About 45 per cent of the chutes could be used again after drying, repairing, and repacking.

Equipment needed especially for American Y Force personnel was dropped in chutes daubed with blue Chinese dye.

The men who did the actual dropping of supplies are known as "kickers." There are about three to a plane and they range themselves around the open door of the transport plane, one on each side and the third on his back with his feet toward the door. At a signal from the pilot they kick the supplies out to the waiting Chinese and Americans below.

The air supply system worked very well and functioned on a regular schedule. Orders from the front would arrive during the night and the requested supplies would be loaded on trucks and taken to the airfield. Then, as early in the morning as possible, the troop carrier planes would be on their way to the dropping target.

According to Major Robert N. Wolfe, of Robbinsdale, Minnesota, the efficiency of the Y Force Air Dropping Detachment has been due to the close co-operation between

(*Continued on page 16*)

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(*Continued from page 13*)

ground men and pilots of the T. C. C. squadron. Although the kickers are all enlisted men in the ground forces, principally the Quartermaster Corps, nine of them have earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and twenty-one the Air Medal.

Down—but Not Out!

More than one airman who was shot down or wounded by the Nazis is getting a chance to play a part in fighting back against the Germans and at the same time rehabilitate himself for postwar work.

Take, for example, Staff Sergeant James "Mic" McLean, twenty-six years old, of Las Vegas, Nevada. He has a personal score to settle with the Nazis, for he was a waist gunner in a B-17 Flying Fortress that was shot down and strafed after it crashed by a Nazi JU-88. McLean was shot in the leg. Several crew members were killed. The survivors were rescued.

Sergeant McLean is convalescing at the Army's Birmingham General Hospital at Van Nuys, California, and is assembling parts for the Northrop Black Widow P-61 night fighter. Each time he drills a hole or fastens a bolt he makes a mental observation: Maybe this will be part of the plane that will blast that German JU-88 out of the sky. He himself is part of the most unusual production line in the country. The hospital's reconditioning program for war-wounded soldiers has a triple wallop. It helps aircraft production, provides patients with mind-occupying activity, and provides training for postwar jobs.

Those B-29s Are Big Jobs

When you read of the latest B-29 raid over Japan, remember that it takes a total of eighty-five men (twelve officers and seventy-three enlisted men) to keep a single B-29 in combat.

First of all there is the air crew of fourteen, which includes several more than are actually used on a single flight. There are eighteen men in operations. Maintenance accounts for twenty. Housekeeping requires twelve, administration thirteen, and transportation eight.

This may seem like a lot of men to keep one bomber in combat operations. Actually the number of men is kept to an absolute minimum because of the long-range supply problems. The B-29 is a monster machine in itself, and a fleet of B-29s requires virtually a self-contained city to support it. It's big-time transportation, with the men on the ground at the home base playing just as important roles (without the risks) as the men in the plane.

Trans-Pacific Traffic Control

Air traffic is so heavy out in the Central Pacific that the Army has asked the Civil Aeronautics Administration to provide the same type of air-traffic control on the "Tokyo run" that is supplied in the United States. The CAA is now staffing and equipping stations at Johnston Island, Kwajalein, Guam, and one other point with civilians who are experts in directing traffic.

In fact, the CAA has established the OATC (Oceanic Air Traffic Control) to serve both the Army and the Navy in the Pacific, and all this means the extension of our domestic air-traffic control procedures clear out across the Pacific. The CAA has operated a control system at Honolulu for some time. So far in the war, the CAA engineers and maintenance men have supervised construction of signals and communications stations at 204 places outside the United States to guide U. S. airmen about the globe.

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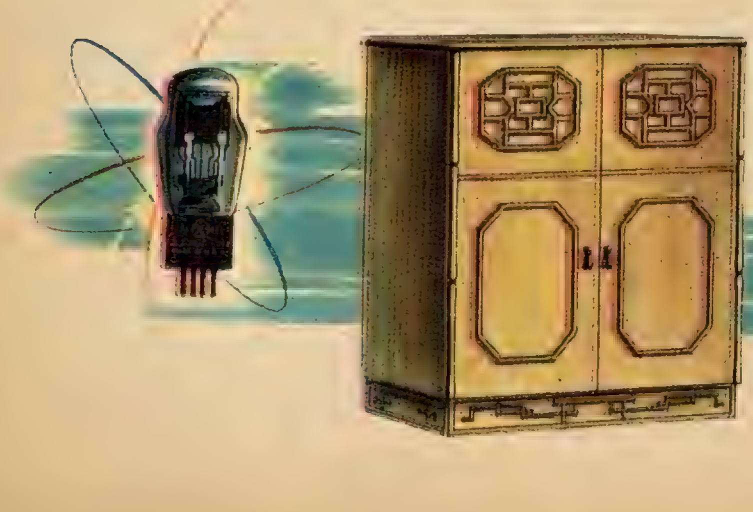
- This is General Electric FM "natural color" radio. It is radio that reaches new heights of tonal fidelity, with *static, fading and station interference* reduced to the vanishing point—the kind of radio you will want after Victory.

FREE: A fascinating booklet, "YOUR COMING RADIO." 28 pages profusely illustrated in full color. Previews an entirely new kind of radio that reduces static to the vanishing point . . . Radio-phonographs that reveal music on your records you have never heard before . . . Self-charging portables that eliminate expense of frequent battery replacements . . . Latest advances in television . . . No matter which General Electric model you prefer, its G-E monogram will stand for the highest quality in tone, style, performance . . . all at popular prices. For your free copy of "Your Coming Radio," mail a postcard request to Electronics Department, General Electric, Schenectady, New York.

Hear the G-E radio programs: "The World Today" news, Monday through Friday, 6:45 p. m., EWT, CBS. "The G-E All-Girl Orchestra," Sunday 10 p. m., EWT, NBC. "The G-E House Party," Monday through Friday, 4 p. m., EWT, CBS.



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By **WILLIAM van NARVIG**

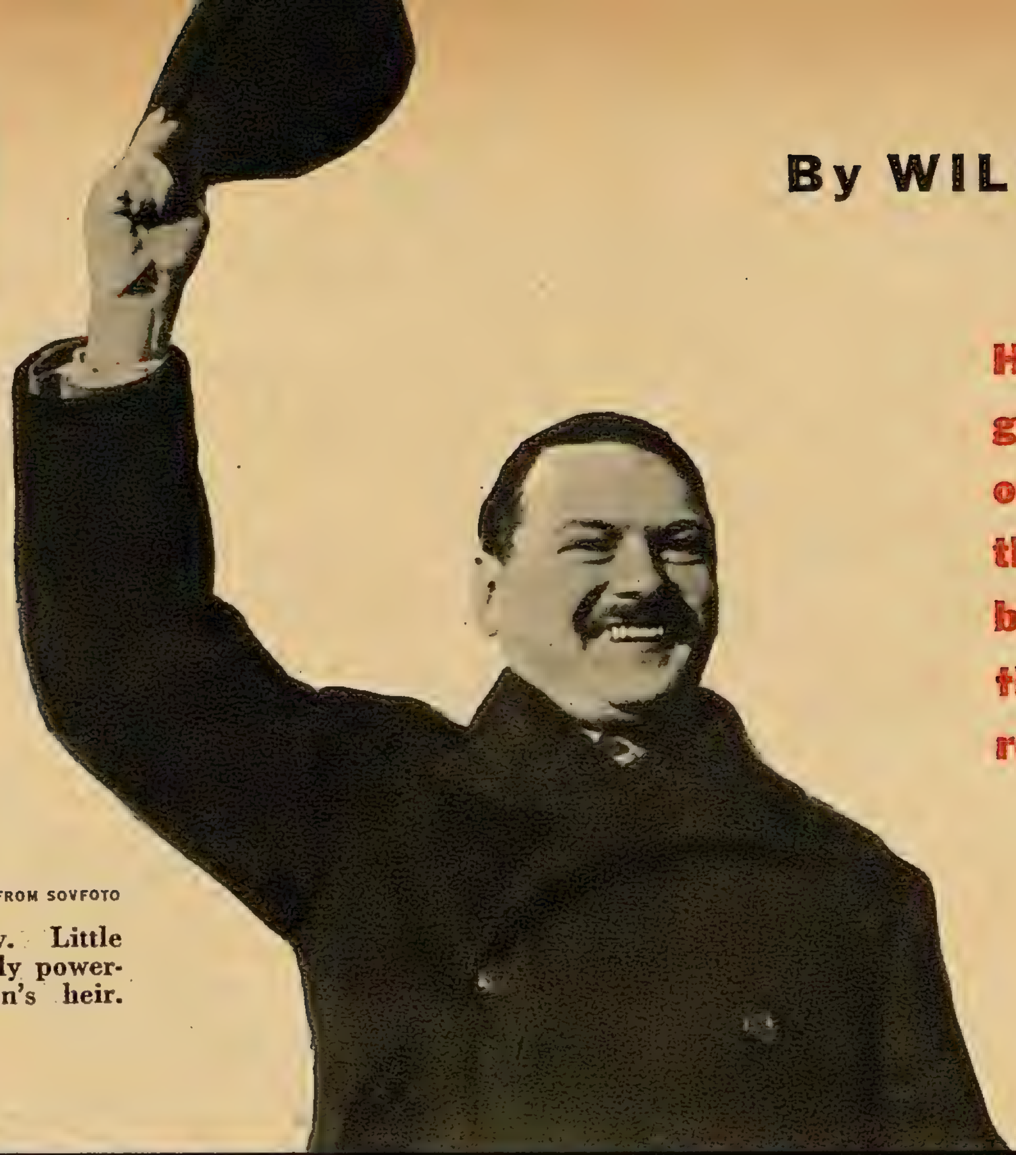


PHOTO FROM SOVFOTO

Andrei Zhdanov. Little known but secretly powerful, he is Stalin's heir.

He held the Nazis at Leningrad, closed Russia's fist on the Baltic, and organized the first Russian army to break into Germany. But these are just a few of the reasons why he's

The Man Who Will Succeed Stalin

TODAY'S Russians look upon Marshal Joseph Stalin as the greatest and most successful leader their country has ever had. Stripped of all embellishments, Stalin's greatness lies in the simple fact that he understands the Russians and they understand him. What could be more natural than an ardent desire on Stalin's part to perpetuate this happy state of affairs by grooming a successor who understands the Russians as well as he does? He wants none of the dissensions that split the government after Lenin's passing. He wants to preserve the heritage built up by endless suffering and sacrifice. And he has found the man.

It is generally accepted that the turning point of the war in Russia occurred in and around battered Stalingrad during those bloody December days of 1942. As this reporter discovered to his surprise, the people of Leningrad think differently. They point to their own history in the war and contend that the turning point came on November 14, 1941, barely five months after Hitler had invaded Russia.

In the early morning hours of that fateful day the Leningrad defense council met in session. The Germans were less than ten miles from the city gates. They had cut the October Railroad and were moving to sever the last rail link between Leningrad and the rest of Russia.

The military leaders arrived at the conclusion that the city could not be held. No relief armies were in sight. The Wehrmacht was engaged in its all-out offensive against Moscow, and all troops that could be spared anywhere in Russia had to be rushed to the defense of the Soviet capital. Leningrad was doomed.

Into the session walked Andrei Zhdanov, political boss of the Leningrad district. He had just flown in from Moscow, where, by order of Premier Stalin, he had been appointed Supreme Commissar of Defense for the Leningrad area. In this capacity he outranked the military commanders.

Zhdanov said, "Leningrad will not surrender. It will fight. We shall fight from house to house, from cobblestone to cobblestone. A point will come where the Germans can go no farther. To take every house, every cellar of this great city by storm, they would have to sacrifice at least one million men. They cannot do it. They will besiege us. We will outlast the siege. We will hold this all-important bastion of Russia's long front. Here the doom of the invading Nazi hordes will be sealed."

THE first winter, the coldest within the memory of living man, was the hardest. Fuel reserves were exhausted in a matter of weeks. There was no gasoline for trucks. The horses had been slaughtered for food. Zhdanov organized demolition squads which went to Staraya Derevnya, Lakhta, and other northern suburbs to tear down all wooden buildings and saw the lumber for firewood. Women and children walked from eight to twelve miles through the bitter cold, worked the whole day in the open, then trudged back, pulling or pushing sleds piled high with old lumber.

The men built defenses. The outskirts of Leningrad bristle with large factories, and all of these were converted into forts. Most of them had been stripped of their machines, but others kept supplying the pressing needs of the Leningrad army despite the fact that many were within a few hundred yards of the German siege trenches. Tanks from the battlefield limped into the Kirov works, were quickly repaired, and rolled right back into action.

Rubble from bombed buildings was piled up, covered with concrete, and converted into huge tank traps. A ring was forged which, Zhdanov insisted, would not be broken. He proved to be right. The Germans in many places came to within a few yards, but they never broke through.

Leningrad's citizen army had to rely almost exclusively on munitions and equipment produced by the few remaining plants, which worked around the clock. For raw materials Leningrad relied on its own scrap, brought in by salvage brigades of women and children working from dawn till dusk. All usable metal went into the foundries and arsenals and came out in the form of tanks, guns, and shells.

The sacrifices of the Leningrad citizenry during that horrible winter are beyond telling. Close to a half million civilians perished. Bombs and shells, typhus, pneumonia, below-zero cold, and plain famine, all took their toll.

During this dreadful ordeal one man dominated the situation—Andrei Zhdanov. His organizing genius was evident everywhere. His strong will, fortified by the dictatorial powers given him by Stalin, kept the reeling city going. He had pledged that Leningrad would hold out, and he devoted every minute of his life to the fulfillment of that pledge. In one twenty-four-hour stretch he addressed nine arms-factory workers' meetings, visited three front-line sectors, presided over an extraordinary session of the Leningrad Soviet, attended a lengthy General Staff conference, and launched a new destroyer, all in addition to his regular day's business. When things looked blackest, his exhortation was, "Hold fast! Things will brighten."

Thus, by the iron determination of one

(*Continued on page 58*)

The River

What chance has a schoolmaster in the rough-and-tumble of business—pitted against the slick young salesman who was his rival for Ellie's hand? The river held the answer

BY NEILL C. WILSON

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN JONES

STEPHEN'S river was deep and strong, that spring of 1940. It boomed, surged, shouted. The schoolmaster of Gilead knew that its name, the Green, was for Wyoming's forests. But here in the Utah mesa country it was turbid, red.

"You're a waster and a hider, Steve," Parley Ferguson had told him. "Running rapids is fool's sport. Teaching school is woman's work."

But tough-gristled, plain-speaking Parley, though head of the Gilead school board, saw life across a counter. Only across calicoes, nails, farm machinery, and his jugs of Uncle Sam Livestock Dip.

Judging the river this morning by marks painted on a rock, Stephen Pringle said to himself, "Thirty thousand cubic feet a second." Snow in the distant Rockies was melting fast. Cautiously he put his skiff out into the eddy. "This will be a boat ride."

He stood up in the wide-bottomed boat to pick a course; he dropped hurriedly to his oars. With push and yank he pointed the square stern downstream. This was a secret he had wrested from the mad river from many drubbings—to go through the roughest spots facing the descent.

It beat through his brain, what Parley Ferguson said of him. "A doorway has to be tall and wide to take you, Steve. But that, in this country, isn't the only way we measure a man."

Man and boat caught the long glassy tongue above Thunder Rapid. They poised for an instant, plunged over. The wild current caught them, shook them, lifted them. Behind sheeted spray a wave boiled up, sucked a cellarlike hole. The boat dropped with a jar. Seas crashed down. The world went wet and black. And up into sunshine they shot. Stephen laughed. The boat was good. It contained all he had learned of length, beam, balance, rake, and pivot.

The short trial of strength behind, he drew in his oars, caught up a chained bucket, bailed briskly. He let the skiff drift into a wide whirlpool. He took pipe, tobacco and matches from a watertight hatch. Here a man could think.

Only the other day, it seemed to him, Ellie Ferguson had been one of a dozen fifteen-year-olds of Gilead. But one morning he had realized she was sixteen, and her eyes not dutifully on the blackboard where he chalked problems, but on him. Next, seventeen, and no swirling, jouncing rapid between here and Boulder Dam able to do to Stephen Pringle what she could do by simply walking by. And now, eighteen. . . .

Tomorrow, his boat packed for his usual summer of solitary voyaging, Stephen would set off from this point. He would go down and down the series of gorges that so few men besides himself had penetrated. He went on such journeys alone, not because he wanted it so but because no man of Gilead would accompany him.

But that plan was for tomorrow and the weeks to come. Before he could depart, one matter would have to be settled in his mind or even in those gorges there would be no peace. He would have to speak to old Parley about Ellie and himself. And then, if opportunity presented, he would speak to Ellie. He sensed that the trader would make stout objections. Parley Ferguson understood only gains that could be weighed on a scale, or entered in a ledger. And precisely how Ellie felt about him he dared not guess. But he would deal with the first of his obstacles. He would go before Parley tonight.

That much resolved, Stephen thrust his heavy oars out and pulled for shore.

A RUDE road, known in Utah as a dugway, came down through the cliffs. Where it met the beach, was a figure sitting on a boulder? Stephen couldn't be sure; when he reached shore the form was gone. The gravel held no identifiable footprints. But then, his imagination had been running away with him recently. It had got so he saw her wherever he looked, on half-submerged rocks, in the clouds, in the great carved faces of the cliffs.

That night, dressed in his best, the schoolmaster of Gilead mounted the steps of the little red-brick house where Ellie lived. Parley Ferguson was sitting behind the vines of his porch in his carpet-covered armchair. The old merchant's hands and clothing were strong with creosote and carbolic from the stock dip he had been bottling. Shrewd Scotch-grained Parley, who ruled the Gilead school board by vote of the people and his house by Old Testament authority, greeted Stephen and told him to have a chair unless he felt like going in.

But Ellie, visible through the window, already had a caller. She was playing the piano. Her eager profile and soft brown hair were dusted by yellow lamplight. Lex Roache was turning her music. Lex was inches smaller than the schoolmaster, but he had curly hair, a quick gay tongue, and a good singing voice.

Parley said, "Those provisions you wanted are ready at the store. When do you start this time, Stephen?"

"Tomorrow. I've come tonight to talk about Ellie, Parley."

"It's fool's business, that river, Stephen."

"I've come to talk about building a house in Silver Glen."

"Why do you go in for make-believe tussles, Stephen?"

"There's a view of mountains and green farmlands from Silver Glen, Parley. I seek your permission to ask Ellie if she would like to live there."

Parley Ferguson said bluntly, "I don't think you know how to rustle, Stephen."

"You mean—like getting out and selling things?"

"Selling is one mighty practical way of making a living. You couldn't sell a bottle of Kentucky bourbon to a Navajo. Not with a silver-mounted saddle thrown in."

Stephen couldn't argue. Once while working through college at Salt Lake City he had tried house-to-house hawking. Rather than bother folks about things they didn't want, he had fled to the Provo mines where he could use his rawboned strength digging coal.

Parley was launched now. He went on, stabbing the twilight with his pipestem, "You and your chalk and blackboards!"

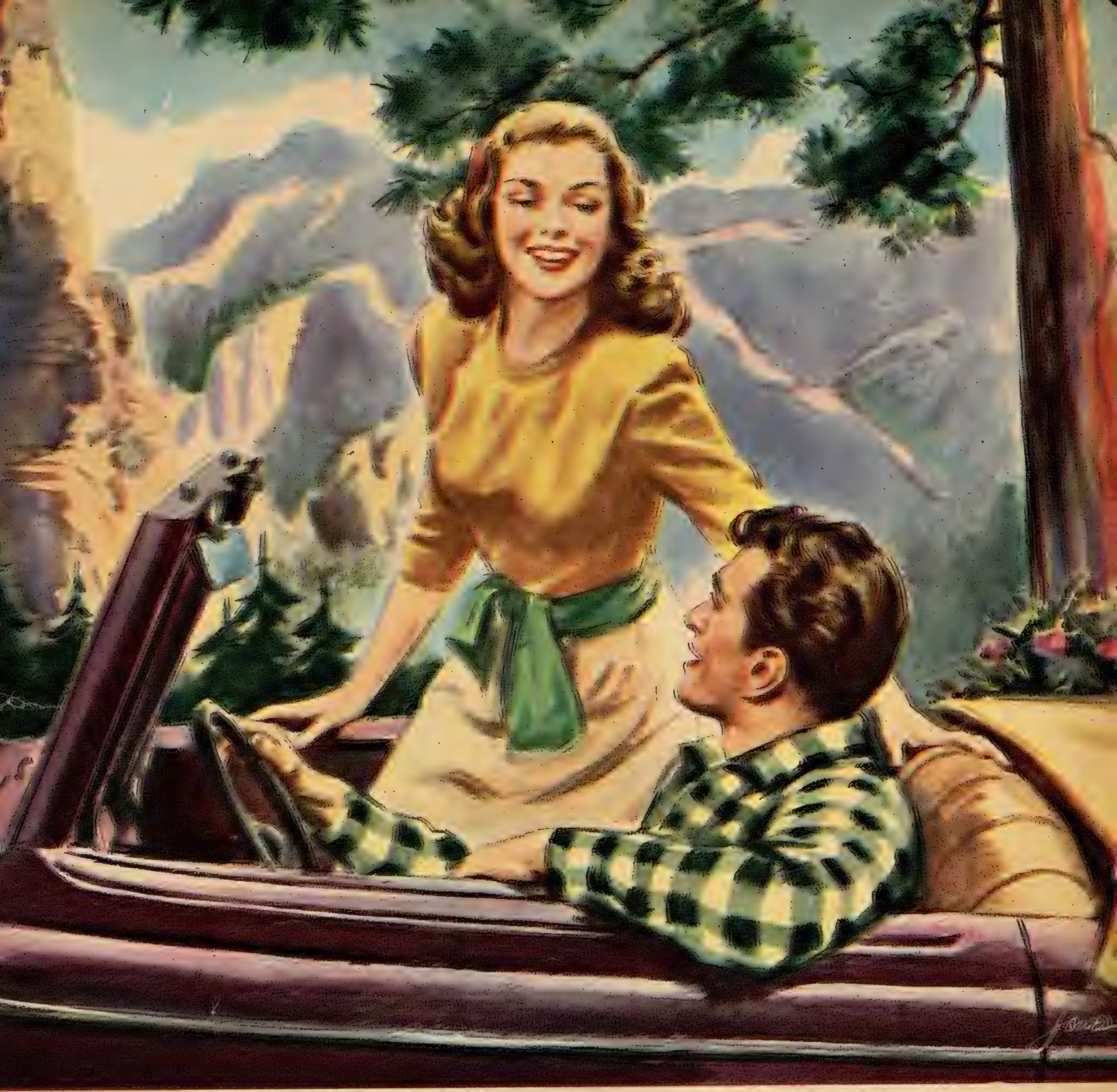
"But I like teaching, Parley. It's what I'm fitted for."

"You and your river."

"THE river is wise and strong. We can learn more things from that river than you'd think possible."

"Take young Lex Roache, in yonder. Lex hustles."

Stephen knew Lex. Lex had been one of his pupils. Bored by what Stephen taught, Lex had dawdled through school in his cocky way, but had always been a demon at selling things. Books and clocks and sewing machines and radios and windmills. Before he was seventeen, Lex had discovered a method for unloading player pianos, a nearly defunct commodity, upon the Utah farmsteads. Driving out into the country with a piano on its back in the truck, he would swing into a barnyard, lower the piano to the ground by a hinged platform, and start pumping a roll while pigs and hens scurried. He would soon have the children and the farm wife for audience. A dollar down, and there the piano would stay for the farmer to get into the house as best he could. If the farmer came racing over the fields before Lex left, Lex probably sold him a bottle of Uncle Sam Dip for good measure.



He stopped his car and she climbed up beside him. In the presence of this mystery of a child turned woman, he was hopelessly tongue-tied.

"There's a rustler," asserted Parley. "He's selling water-softening machines for me now. I wouldn't be surprised if he and Ellie, one of these days . . ."

Stephen hadn't called to talk about Lex and water-softening machines.

"You're twenty-four, Stephen. Mind, I'm not choosing for Ellie—but the party I'll favor, if she comes to me and asks, will show more than calluses on his hands from a pair of oars. Or shine on his pants from warming a schoolmarm's chair."

Ellie's forehead was wide and her cheek had a shell-like clearness under that lamplight, and her hands on the piano keys were nimble and gentle and strong. She looked up at something Lex said and Stephen's heart shot a dozen Thunder Rapids.

He heard himself state, right out there on the porch, "All right, Parley, I'll prove."

"How, Stephen?"

"I'll try to sell exactly what Lex Roache sells. Today is June fifteenth. School starts again on September twenty-fourth. That's one hundred days. Tell Lex, will you?"

"Come around to the store tomorrow and I'll give you a booklet on the Crescent Water Softener and a circular I wrote about the Uncle Sam Dip. It's a good dip. Government formula, and some herbs added that the settlers around here have known about for years. Send livestock through a vat of that, and you won't have any trouble with spotted fever. But you don't have to sell for me, Steve. Sell for anybody. Sell what you please. The point is to show you're practical and able. I'm glad you're not going to throw your summer away on that river."

In the morning, after a further talk with Parley, Stephen went down to the beach to bring up his boat. He wished that the people of Gilead could know the river as he knew it. But they, like Parley, were down-to-earth folks. Water, for them, had meaning only if it brought bloom to the mesas. Below Gilead the Green sprang into a cleft whose rising walls soon became hundreds of feet high. In this straight-walled slot it stayed, marrying the Colorado farther down. Draining off all moisture from the lands above. Giving nothing back. To the people behind the rims it was a robber, an evil and daunting thing. Stephen longed to set off once more down those foaming staircases, until the whole world seemed riven asunder and all its colors and tumults gathered in one place.

(*Continued on page 62*)

OFFICIAL ARMY AND MARINE CORPS PHOTOS

Men of the 77th moving up on Guam. For all of them it was their first taste of combat—and all of them took it like veterans.

I'm Proud to Belong

BY MAJOR GENERAL A. D. BRUCE

Through the hell of Jap savagery, General Bruce has led the men of the 77th Division. Here, in his own words, is how he feels about his famous "old men" — and why

IT was 0200 on a black morning on Guam. The men of a rifle platoon crouched in their foxholes in the mud and darkness of a tropical jungle; the only sound the night noises that make your flesh creep; the only sight an all-encompassing wall of blackness.

A half hour later all hell broke loose. Led by three medium tanks which roared and crashed through the platoon's position, fifty screaming Japs bore down.

As one man, the platoon rose to meet them. Hand grenades showered the fanatic attackers with their deadly fragments; machine guns and BARs stuttered into action, their tracers weirdly lighting up the battleground. Shouted orders and the screams of wounded Japs punctuated the ear-shattering explosions.

When the attack began, Privates First Class Koeberle and Hatch were covering the trail to the platoon's position with a light machine gun. As the leading Jap tank topped a rise about 150 yards in front of them, they started firing—though they knew their light gun was no match for the enemy armor. Their first burst disclosed their position to the tank gunner, who opened up as the tank turned to crush them and their gun into the ground. Koeberle was immediately hit in the back and one leg by shell fragments, and Hatch was hit in one eye and one shoulder. But that didn't stop them. The tank drew nearer and the tracers of their machine gun continued to jab at it, seeking for some point of entry. Finally the bullets found one—a vision slit. The crew was wiped out and the tank stopped—five yards in front of the white-hot, burned-out, and useless barrel of Koeberle's and Hatch's "Baby."

Private First Class Joe Vozza was curled up beside his bazooka in a foxhole when the attack came. He knew it was a job for him and his rockets. He couldn't see very well from the safety of his hole, so he got out of it, exposing himself to a hail of steel in order to get a better shot. He got one, too, and chalked up one tank on the tube of his rocket launcher.

A Jap 47-mm. shell fired from one of the tanks burst near thirty-nine-year-old Charles E. Schaefer of Baltimore, Maryland, the platoon sergeant. The fuse, a three-inch chunk of metal, embedded itself in his back, at the base of his neck. He was completely paralyzed and unable to move. But he could still see, hear, and think. He knew the platoon leader was somewhere in the rear, leading our tanks forward. Until the platoon leader returned, he—Schaefer—was in command.

An aid man looked at his wound and told him the only thing he could do was to remain quietly where he was until the battle was over and he could be evacuated. But Schaefer insisted on being carried to another foxhole, about twenty yards away, where he could better watch the progress of the battle. For the next hour and a half he remained in that hole with his head pillowed on the leg of Private First Class Joe Reidda. When he was put into the hole he asked Reidda for a cigarette and said, "Go easy on my neck—I think it's broken." That was his last reference to himself. The rest of the time he kept Reidda busy answering questions: "How is everything going?" "What are the squad leaders doing now?" "Have the tanks come up yet?"

But Schaefer needn't have worried. The tanks came up, led by the platoon leader, Lieutenant Kenfield, who had a Jap bullet hole in his neck. Squad leaders and men were fighting desperately to drive the Japs off, and they were succeeding. Two sergeants, Miller and Tiernan, left the cover of their foxholes, manned a .50-caliber machine gun mounted on a jeep and blasted at the Jap tanks and riflemen until a shell from one of the tanks knocked over a coconut tree. This fell on the jeep, smashing the gun and knocking Miller and Tiernan off into the mud. But the team was still fighting, every man determined to account for as many Japs as possible.

By 0400 the battle was over. Two Jap tanks had been destroyed, most of their riflemen killed and the remainder driven off. As soon as things had quieted down sufficiently, Sergeant Schaefer was moved to the battalion aid station. There Captain Cornwell, battalion surgeon, removed the chunk of metal from his back, operating in the glow of a flashlight, screened from Jap snipers by a poncho. There was no anesthetic—no time for that—but Schaefer remained conscious and cheerful throughout the ordeal. His only remark was, "I got four of the little bastards myself today, doc, with only four shots. A helluva note I had to get it myself tonight!"

Lieutenant Colonel Gordon T. (Kim) Kimbrell visited Schaefer in the aid station and gave him a cigarette in the jeep ambulance just before it left to take him to the beach. Schaefer grinned and said, "So long, colonel. Save my spot for me. I'll be back." He died on the hospital ship.

Several times I have made the statement that I am proud to belong to the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division. There are many reasons why I am proud—reasons that such men as these provide. Schaefer, Vozza, Miller, Tiernan, Koeberle, Hatch, Reidda, Kenfield were not professional soldiers. They were just ordinary American citizens who, before this war overtook them, never thought they'd face an enemy on the field of battle. To all of them Guam offered their first taste of combat, but they took it like veterans. There are few things more terrifying than a tank-and-infantry attack in the black of night; but here there was no breaking, no running, no panic. Each man stood fast and did the job he had been trained to do, and a little bit more on top of it.

There's not much that is unusual about the action I've described. It was bloody but brief, and has been paralleled hundreds of times in this and other theaters of war. But no one could resist a thrill of pride in belonging to an outfit whose men take such a battle in their stride.

MANY men do heroic things in the heat and excitement of combat. Sometimes the stimulus of battle is so great that men don't realize the risks they are taking. But when a man does know the danger of what he is doing and yet goes ahead with it because it's his job and he knows someone is counting on him to do it—that manifests courage!

Private Edward L. Heaney was cannoneer on a 105-mm. howitzer firing a preparation mission for the attack on Oroté Peninsula. As the first round was fired, the lanyard on the firing mechanism broke. Heaney could have declared his gun out of action, but he knew the marines up front needed all the support they could get. So he kept his gun firing, tripping the hammer by hand. That's a tricky job, and he knew it. If your stance or timing is a little off, you stand a good chance of losing a hand or an arm when the gun recoils. Heaney was lucky—his arm was only severely lacerated, but not until the last round was fired and the needed support had been given. You can depend on men like that.

THE celebrated Statue of Liberty Division (the 77th Infantry), under the command of Major General A. D. Bruce, broke into headlines during the storming of Guam. The 77th made front-page news again when it landed behind the enemy lines in the Leyte campaign. By a series of brilliant attacks, the 77th captured more than forty-two miles of main supply roads, the ports of Ormoc and Palompon, the Valencia air strip, and the key road junction north of Libongao, killing and capturing in the process about 20,000 of the enemy. Battle-scarred veterans now, these men had their baptism of fire on Guam. In a heartwarming article, their commanding officer tells what he thinks of the boys of his outfit.

And you can depend on men with a sense of humor. Take those men of the Seventy-seventh who waded ashore through water up to their ears, spent their first night in mud and rain with Jap small-arms fire and mortar shells searching for them, lived for days on C and K rations, killed and were killed, hacked endless miles of trail through the steaming jungle. In spite of the hell they were undergoing, they all found things like this to laugh and joke about:

A rifle company commander had gone through numerous stiff engagements with his company and had faced murderous Jap fire countless times, but had come through it all without a scratch. Shortly before the campaign ended he was leading his men against a pocket of Jap resistance when he turned around to shout orders and encouragement. While thus exposed, he was seriously wounded. When his men placed him, face down, on a stretcher for evacuation to the aid station, he lamented, "What a way to end it all—shot in the fanny!"

And once a small group of soldiers were sitting around their platoon leader, getting instructions for the night, when they heard a rustle in the underbrush and saw a dark figure moving through it. A private grabbed his rifle and dashed off to investigate. His platoon leader called after him, "What is it—American or Jap?" The answer floated back: "Neither, sir. It's a marine."

Then take the time Protestant Chaplain Kerr was conducting services in a small clearing when machine guns started rattling off to one side and bullets whined and popped over the heads of his flock. Trained to react instinctively under such circumstances, everyone hit the dirt—except Chaplain Kerr. When the brief fusillade of shots ended, he looked down at his prone devotees and calmly remarked, "Gentlemen, shall we rise and sing hymn number fifty-six?"

You can't stop men like that.

RADIO TOKYO called these men killers. Maybe they are when there's a job to be done and no other way to do it; but if Tokyo Rose was trying to portray their inner nature, she missed the truth by several miles. A lawyer with ten years' practice to his credit, a cantor from a New York synagogue, a ceramics engineer, a personnel manager of a clothing firm, a Dartmouth graduate, a father of three, an auditor, a choir leader of a small-town church, a fashion designer from New York's Fifth Avenue—enlisted men all—such are the "killers" of the Seventy-seventh Division. In South Carolina, Arizona, Florida, Virginia, California, Oahu, wherever they've been, they have left behind them a reputation for cleanliness, order, co-operation, and courtesy in their dealings with civilians and the military alike.

It was one of these hard-boiled "killers" who suggested "Liberty Torch" as the name of their division newspaper, and "Ours to hold it high" as the motto. He was not waving the flag when he suggested it, nor were his buddies when they accepted it. But thank God we have men who keep that mental flag flying before them!

A large proportion of the men who make up this Division joined the Army with the

(*Continued on page 56*)

The 77th won its spurs in skirmishes like this, where they flush Jap snipers.

By Ted Shane

A Tobacco Road Olsen and Johnson in a quiet moment of Laffing Room Only! That's Johnson wearing Pillsbury's best.

This kind of stuff nets the boys $15,000 a week. They're politicians here—don't mind kissing babes.

Two Likable

RECENTLY there was a rumor that the government would freeze gunpowder for civilian uses. The ensuing consternation among Nimrods and safecrackers was mild compared with the panic around New York's Winter Garden, where Ole Olsen and Chic Johnson are appearing in Laffing Room Only! No gunpowder would mean no show. In fact, if the Chinese hadn't invented the stuff, there'd be no Olsen & Johnson. They average 150,000 rounds of blank cartridges a year, use twenty-two revolvers in Laffing Room Only! and need lots of powder to load the trick barrel which explodes when Johnson spits in it.

For about thirty years Olsen & Johnson have been making a good living out of the principle that if you rush onstage screaming and fire a machine gun point-blank in your audience's face, that audience—instead of retreating to the nearest Shakespearean revival—will come back for more. I've looked in on three performances of Laffing Room Only! a typical O. & J. smörgåsbord of din, old vaudeville acts, and corny jokes. Each time the S. R. O. sign was out. Even the phones in Olsen's dressing room were ringing with calls from friends willing to *pay* for tickets. Ole has to buy these from the scalps.

Like its noisy ancestors, Hellzapoppin' and Sons o' Fun, L. R. O., unless it falls victim to some government restriction, or the public loses its passion for insanity, is good for a longevity record. Its weekly take is bigger than the absurdly successful Hellzapoppin', the first O. & J. big-time venture. Because of war prices, it averages $43,000 a week, $15,000 of which goes to the boys to split and struggle along on. It may not top Hellzapoppin's staggering box-office record—$12,000,000, including movie money and three and a half years on Broadway, but it ought to equal Sons o' Fun, which netted $3,941,762.22 exactly, ran for about two years on Broadway, and closed only because the boys had movie commitments and thought the public needed a rest.

Just a big business man in a clown's make-up, the fifty-two-year-old Olsen explains things this way: "Chic and I aren't comedians. We're merchandisers of humor. We sell hokum. Our shows are big parties and the public is invited to join in. They wanted us to change L. R. O. from our basic formula of a bopp on the head with a bladder, followed by a song, to something different—something with a plot. But if you're selling shoestrings and you stay in business thirty years, you're fundamentally right. Besides, plots are for undertakers."

There is spiritual as well as financial method in the calculated madness of these two clamor boys from the Midwest. The reason they hit you with beans in the dark, toss eggs at you, and blow compressed air up your gal's skirts at their shows is because they love you and want to be loved in return. Their personal tragedy is that they've never been able to win the affection of New York's ice-hearted critics.

Despite their thirty years of performing, the uninitiated have never been able to tell which is Olsen and which is Johnson. There used to be a standard cry from the gallery: "Hey, which one of you mugs is Johnson?" Olsen would oblige by pointing to himself. More reliable identification is that Johnson has a three-chinned baby face with staring eyeballs that look like "blue poached eggs," and a figure like a blimp. He rarely talks—offstage or on—is largely the pantomimist. Olsen is taller and darker, weighs only 175, looks like a Norwegian whose grandmother was scared by a Sicilian, and never stops talking.

IT is hard to say where the gabby, affable Olsen works harder—offstage or on. When Johnson disappears offstage into parts unknown (he's the silent partner), Olsen carries on the show in his dressing room, which is more like the rush hour on the subway than a football scrimmage. Once upon a time there was a rule at the Winter Garden stage door: "No Admission." When Olsen first moved in, the stage doorman tried valiantly to stem the tide of tycoons, generals, G. I.s, touches, talent, Presbyterians, priests, and sparrows that surged in. But it was like trying to keep reporters out of a saloon. When I called on Olsen recently, I naïvely asked permission to enter. The doorman looked at me as if I were nuts.

The L-shaped dressing room is about eight feet long and three feet wide. Over the door hang two ears of dried corn, and just inside is a couch. This usually has a lovely young lady on it, reading a book—paying attention to no one, and never turning a page. Next comes a desk at which Olsen's secretary sits, talking into two phones at once. These have private

All the world's a stooge, and parts of the show surprise even its stars.

After the curtain, the show still goes on in Olsen's dressing room.

If gunpowder hadn't been invented, you'd never have heard of these two. But when they're around, it's always a blow-up. Some people call them crazy, but they're really just

Lads Loaded With Laughs

numbers—which are given to everybody by the sociable Olsen.

In this vast setting the Olsen public-relations act goes on morning, night, and noon. People pile in constantly to grasp the hand of, or do business with, the great man. He stands in the little L in his (or Johnson's) underwear, changing from green- to red-and-white peppermint stripes, dictating letters, autographing checks and pictures of himself and Johnson peering out through a cornfield.

There's Olsen's lawyer with a new property he wants Ole to buy; Ed Cline, who directs the comedy in the show, with an idea for a new bit; a dwarf or two; Elmer Musco, Ole's valet; Dave Murray, Ole's harassed general factotum and idea man; and a sprinkling of Olsen & Johnson relatives. These make up the basic crowd. Sometimes the place gets so jammed, Olsen can't get in himself, and has to change on the landing outside.

The dressing room has even become a rival of the Astor lobby, down the street. One day while I was there, a young lady stuck her head in the door and asked for a Miss Ashfoot. Nobody knew Miss A. "Well, she told me to meet her here," the gal said, "and I better wait." She plunked herself firmly on the couch with the beautiful bookworm and a stout lady in glasses, and waited an hour. Miss Ashfoot finally turned up, a radio interviewer who'd picked the place as a handy rendezvous.

Olsen took it quite unconcernedly—as he did another oddity. While he was telling Miss Ashfoot some of his thoughts on life, someone came in with two pairs of false teeth which had presumably been removed for more comfortable laughter and left in the theater the night before. Olsen had them sent out to the box office for claiming, then called a couple of gossip columnists he thought might like to print the item. Both columnists refused the story on the grounds that it was just publicity.

THANKS to a file containing the names of a few thousand of his intimate friends, Ole greets everybody by his first name. This file is insurance against having to spend an old age in the Actors' Home. It dossiers every O. & J. fan from the Asst. Mgr. of the Bon Ton Store at Altena, Michigan, to Senator Barkley, Henry Ford, and Jimmy Doolittle. Thus, when a visiting hinterlander drops into the dressing room after the show and gives his name to Bee Edlund, Olsen's secretary, there is some hasty surreptitious file-consulting and whispering. "Hello, Joe Glotz," Ole then beams as he makes with the glad hand. "How's everything at the bank? How's Bill Shneerbrenzer, the old goat? That was some night, wasn't it?" Joe Glotz, so greeted, isn't going back to Peoria and denounce Olsen & Johnson publicly as a pair of snooty hams—or refuse thereafter to send his kids and their kids to the latest O. & J. product.

No human beings have ever joined more things than O. & J. They're every variety of Elk, Lion, and Kiwanian known to man. They even belong to things called the Yellow Dog Club and the International Crac-Pots of New Haven, Connecticut. Their honorary police badges would build a battleship if they melted them down. Capitalist Republicans though they be, they're members of quite a few unions; the International Itinerant Workers Union of Hoboes of America has honored them, as has the C. I. O. They're admirals of the Flagship Fleet, and have been made Kentucky colonels twice—one governor having forgotten that a predecessor had already appointed them.

These frantic activities, of course, have a certain effect on box-office receipts, and Olsen & Johnson know what to do with these when they roll in. They form corporations. Thus far they are thirteen corporations in all. They own several apartment houses, a hotel or two, the Westwood Ice Skating Rink near Hollywood, and the Ole Olsen 4-40 Club, a restaurant in midtown New York. For the postwar world, Olsen plans a series of super super markets with helicopter parking space on some portions of Long Island he owns.

To drain off his surplus cash, Johnson operates the Winter Garden Farms up near Carmel, New York. It has 1,000 acres, a swimming pool, little theater, 10,000 chickens, and 278 Guernseys (late of the Borden exhibit at the World's Fair). Johnson sells the show the eggs they pitch at the audience.

John Svigard Olsen of Peru (Pea-roo), Indiana, fresh out of Northwestern, was seeking a new pianist for his College Four, playing the Chicago rathskellers at the time, when he ran into Harold Ogden Johnson of Englewood, Chicago, in a music publisher's office in 1914. Impressed by Johnson's right hand on the piano, Olsen displayed his high-yellow bulldog button

(Continued on page 86)

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

The Lovers

Twenty years before, these two men had fought for the love of a woman—and one of them had won her. But time can do strange things. Who was the winner now?

BY RICHARD G. HUBLER

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

THE fat man in the olive coveralls drove the amphibious tractor into the brush at the right bank of the river. Twenty-five yards inland there was high ground. As much farther, the jungle vanished. Rows of palm trees, planted in dressed files like soldiers, appeared. Emerging from the primeval, heterogeneous chaos of the brush onto the cropped sod and between the columns of the coconut grove was like passing from the anarchy of creation into paradise.

To another, it might have been more than a pleasant surprise. To the driver of the tractor it was merely familiar. He nodded his head as if to indicate it was no more than he had expected. His memory was satisfied. Simont had evidently kept up the plantation, though, in these times, he could not hope to sell much copra. Through the vistas formed by the palm trunks, the cattle—which kept the grass down to the appearance of a well-mowed lawn—could be seen.

Through the trees, too, could be seen the red-painted galvanized-iron roof of Simont's house. The driver nodded his head again in satisfaction and jerked at the gears. Five minutes later the tractor stopped a few yards from the veranda of the house.

The fat man threw a leg over the side and climbed down. The gleam of silver maple leaves on his collar shone in the sun: he was a lieutenant colonel of Marines.

He walked toward the broad porch. At the steps of grimy concrete he hesitated. "Hello!" he called tentatively. There was no answer. He repeated his hail in a louder tone. "You there, Simont?" he called.

There was a stir inside the house. A figure, dim at first, then increasing in solidity and outline, stood in the house doorway. The fat officer blinked. "Simont?"

"Yes," said the figure. It was all he said. The visitor felt the intangible hostility flung out at him like a stone. The other was waiting, watching, shrewdly biding until he should know more about the stranger.

"I am Connors," said the officer. The sun was hot, and he looked longingly at the shade of the veranda a few feet away.

"Connors?" The voice of Simont was polite and questioning.

"I knew you," said the fat man. His voice was sharper as he felt impelled to amplify. "You knew me. It was years ago. You remember Marie? And this?" His finger traced a curious circular scar on the left side of his forehead.

"Ah, Connors," said Simont. He moved noiselessly to one side and a chair scraped across the veranda floor. "Come in."

Connors went thankfully into the cavern of cool outer darkness. He sank into a low cane chair and looked across at the Frenchman.

He saw a thin, wizened man with a shaved skull. The skin was dark and seamed with wrinkles. The flesh looked lifeless, as if it had been hastily dried in a kiln. But the black eyes darted like lizards at him; or, suddenly, they held him in a calm, appraising stare.

The Frenchman was dressed only in a pair of blue dungaree trousers. They were held up by a rope used as a belt. He had no shoes and his face was unshaved.

For his part, Simont saw Connors as a well-fleshed, well-kept man. He was red-faced and closely shaved. The olive coveralls were not altogether clean but they held a slight press. Around his neck, on a plastic thong, were two brass identification disks. His hair was almost gone: a thin fuzz of grizzle color remained about the temples and behind the ears. He wore a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles and his teeth, which might have been false, were good when he smiled.

"Well," began Connors in his harsh voice, "it's been a long time. Eh, Simont?"

The Frenchman inclined his head. "You would care for some wine, Connors?" he inquired. "I can recommend it. My own."

"Glad to," replied Connors. A thought struck him. "Not too much alcohol in it? Bad in this heat."

"There is some alcohol in it," said Simont. "But not enough to alarm one!" Connors nodded gratefully. Simont got up and went into the house.

Connors had time to look around. The yard was of pounded dirt. There was a chopping block with an ax stuck in it and dark stains along its side—doubtless where some chickens had been executed. There was a fence of a single rusty wire strand; some straggling, withered rosebushes leaned against it.

AN acrid odor hung about everything. Connors recognized it as wood smoke. It gave him a twinge of nostalgia.

Connors had time to observe two or three sheds in the distance toward the coconut grove and the river before Simont came padding noiselessly back. He carried a square bottle and two tumblers of thick glass. He observed the direction of Connors' gaze.

"I have some pigs and hens," he said. "You will recognize the pen of Marquette. The other two are quite new. One is for the drying of copra; the other for the drying of coffee. I raise a little, as well as a few bananas, some papaya, and avocados."

Connors smiled. Simont poured out the wine, a golden-brown fluid, and raised his glass. "And a few grapes," he added. Connors drank. The wine was good.

"You have done very well with Old Man Marquette's place," Connors said casually.

"Yes," said Simont gravely. "But it is not changed very much. Here one gets to dislike change."

Their eyes rested for a moment on the amphibious tractor. Simont met Connors' glance, and the officer felt himself flushing.

"That, for instance," said Simont. "I feel it is a monstrosity. It is terrible because I do not understand it and because I have no curiosity concerning it. Perhaps that is what is terrible."

"Would you rather I moved it?" inquired Connors.

Simont shook his head. The two men drank again and fell into a silence. Connors looked out over the sunny stretches of what had once been Marquette's farm and was now Simont's; occasionally he would look covertly at Simont, but the Frenchman was gazing at the wine in his glass with the impassive, almost bovine stare which Connors remembered. His expression angered the officer; possibly because it was one of the last pictures—and one of the most persistent—of his memory.

"Well," he said. Simont moved, looking up at Connors with a hooded, unfathomable aspect. "Well," continued Connors, "what about Marie?"

SIMONT shook his head. "There is nothing between us on that score," he replied. "That is all over. Marie is—dead."

Connors' face could not conceal his shock. The ruddy glow of his complexion faded temporarily. "Dead?" he whispered.

Simont nodded and filled his own glass again. "Yes," he told him. "A long time ago."

Again they drank. Connors absently fingered the scar on his head. He saw the ghost of a smile on Simont's face, vanishing almost before it was evident.

"No use, that, eh?" remarked Simont.

Conners shook his head. "Now that we are older," he said, "it seems a little foolish."

Simont said nothing. "*'Tout lasse, tout casse, tout passe,'*" he quoted finally. "Perhaps I have said it wrongly; the recollection does queer tricks in these latitudes. But the sentiment is there.

"Still, I cannot believe it was foolish. Not in those days when Marie was lovely—and alive. When we were young—and foolish, as you say."

"She was worth fighting over, you mean?" Connors asked. He wagged his head, denying his own question.

Simont spread his fingers. "Then why did you come here, if it was not her memory which brought you?"

"Sentiment," responded Connors, unconsciously selecting Simont's word. "Nostalgia. The old ague of the mind which shakes you until you cure yourself. I came because there was a little sickness inside me which could not be cured until Marie was—gone. Now that I know she is dead—"

He made an expressive gesture with his glass and drank.

"You are an officer?" inquired Simont.

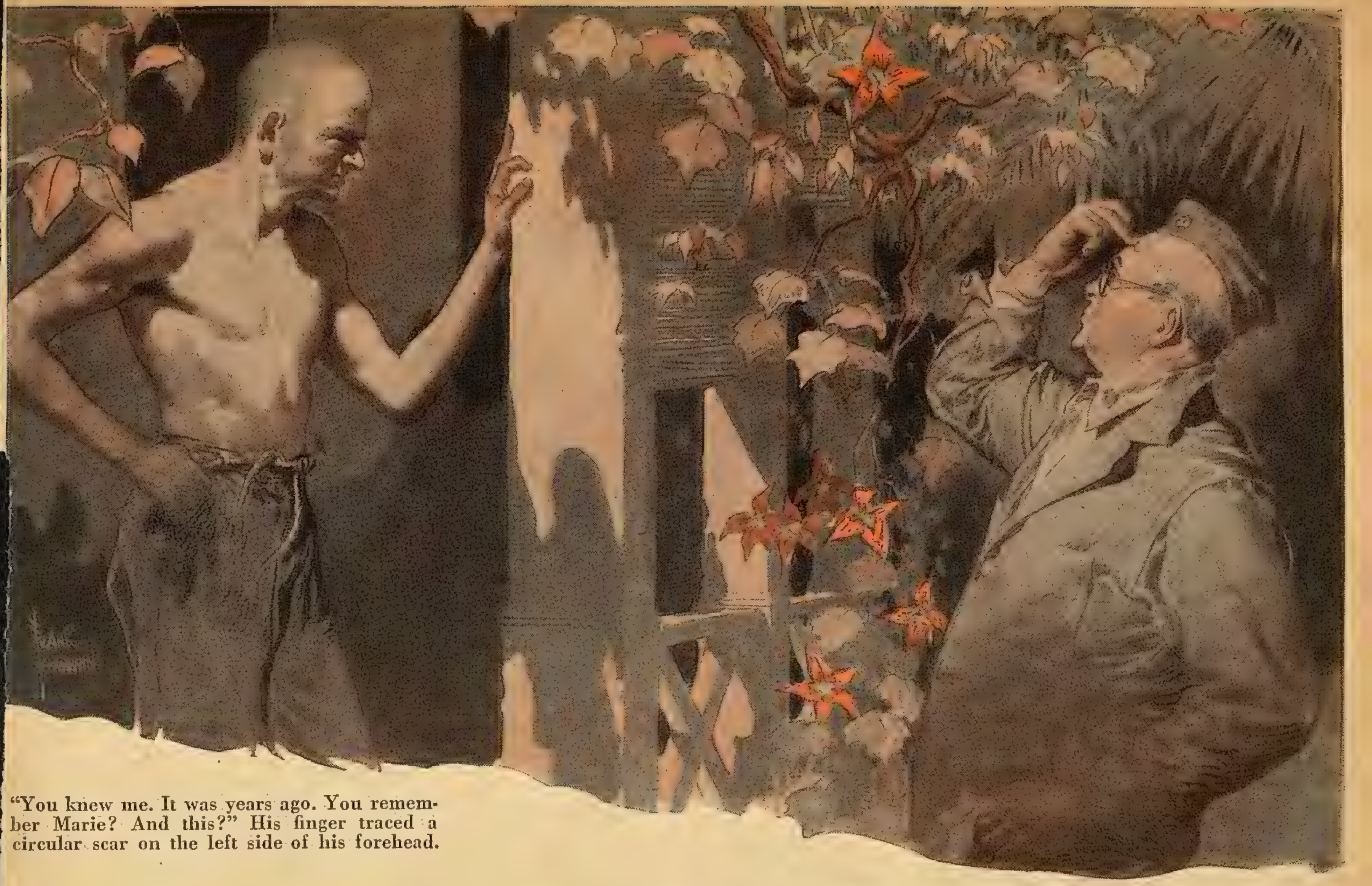
Connors nodded. "A lieutenant colonel of Marines," he replied.

"There are a great many soldiers on this island," said Simont reflectively, "but few of them go so far up the river."

"You were lucky the Japanese never came this far south," Connors said.

Simont bowed his head briefly in agreement. "These Pacific islands were different when you came before," he said. "More peaceful. Lazier. Perhaps more lovely."

"Yes."



"You knew me. It was years ago. You remember Marie? And this?" His finger traced a circular scar on the left side of his forehead.

"Did you come again on a special mission?"

"They knew I had sailed between the islands twenty years ago. They needed someone who had information about the channels. That is why I am an officer."

"Twenty years? As short as that?"

Connors stirred. "Does it seem short to you?" he asked in surprise. "It seemed so long to me."

"Yes," the Frenchman replied. "It seems a century."

"I don't suppose you remember her, Simont."

"A little. Not very much."

Connors took a deep breath that sounded like a sigh. "I can recall her as if she were here. That bright little face and dark eyes; the long, tumbled hair; the slim legs. But most of all I can remember the spirit of her—that glorious brightness, the radiance which was like nothing in the world. Do you remember that, Simont?"

The Frenchman lowered his head. "No," he replied evenly. "I confess I do not."

Suddenly the fat face and the full body of Connors seemed young and vibrant again. "I loved her more than you!" he exclaimed triumphantly. "More than you could have hoped to love her!"

"That is possible," said Simont calmly.

"And now it is too late," concluded Connors hopelessly. The moment of false youth was gone.

"That is true," returned Simont.

"You were impatient to return?" Simont asked a little later.

The officer thrust his head forward like a bull. "I thought Marie—"

"You have not married?"

"No."

"You knew old Marquette had died and I had married Marie, with the plantation as dowry?"

"I knew."

"Yet you came?"

"I told you. To rid myself of an old memory. A fester that cankered."

"You have forgiven me for striking you?"

Connors' fingers went to his scar once more. He smiled wryly.

"We were both hot-blooded. And young," he replied. "I would have done the same. It was a fair fight, with Marie as the prize."

"She might have loved you more."

CONNORS shrugged. "Who knows? Now that she is dead, it does not matter."

"My sending you to the hospital in Sydney was not only the act of a merciful man. It was also the act of a rival."

Connors drained his glass. "No matter." He started to rise, but Simont leaned over and put a hand on his arm.

"It may be you will not believe this, Connors," he said softly, "but I did not hate you. When I struck you, yes, for the instant. Since then, when there were only mad words and blows between us, a great deal of time has gone by—and now that is between us. You, in my mind, have become a friend. But in my mind only."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that meeting you again is meeting a stranger. What I cherish is the sight of you in my mind—young, angry, handsome. This Lieutenant Colonel Connors is not kin to him, the youthful Connors of my mind."

"Strange," said Connors in a peculiar voice. His eyes were fixed on Simont's face. He wore the expression of a man who has just heard his own thoughts spoken, his own reckonings laid bare.

"So I do not feel as a friend toward you," Simont went on rapidly. "I feel only that you are strange to me, that we both have known someone fine and memorable who lies buried in the years. Yet for the sake of that person who lies buried, I would not do you a hurt. I would save you from pain because of my recollection of you."

Connors looked away from the intent gaze of Simont. He could not fathom what the plantation owner, his onetime friend, could mean. But he recognized the urgency of dismissal in the other's voice.

He got up. "Thank you, Simont," he said. The Frenchman stretched him a lean hand. They shook silently. Connors went out to the tractor and started the motor. The machine wheeled stolidly about and began its waddling course across the cleared space. As it entered the rows of palms, Connors half turned and waved. The next moment he was swallowed up behind the sheds.

Simont did not return the wave. He sat down and filled his glass. He drank slowly. The minutes went by in the stillness while the heat, imperceptibly, sifted in toward him from the sun-stricken yard.

A movement at the doorway did not disturb him. "Who was that man?" asked a querulous voice.

Simont still contemplated his wine. "A stranger," he answered at last.

"Why did he come here?" persisted the whining monotone.

Simont slowly turned his head and looked at the woman who leaned against the jamb. She was fat and frowzy, clothed in a filthy print dress. Her breasts sagged, long and pendulous; her legs were fat and greasy. Her hair lay scant and matted. The eyes in her bloated face were lackluster and sunken. She might have been thirty or sixty. Even at a distance her breath was vile.

"Who knows?" he replied. He finished his wine, his hand firm and untrembling.

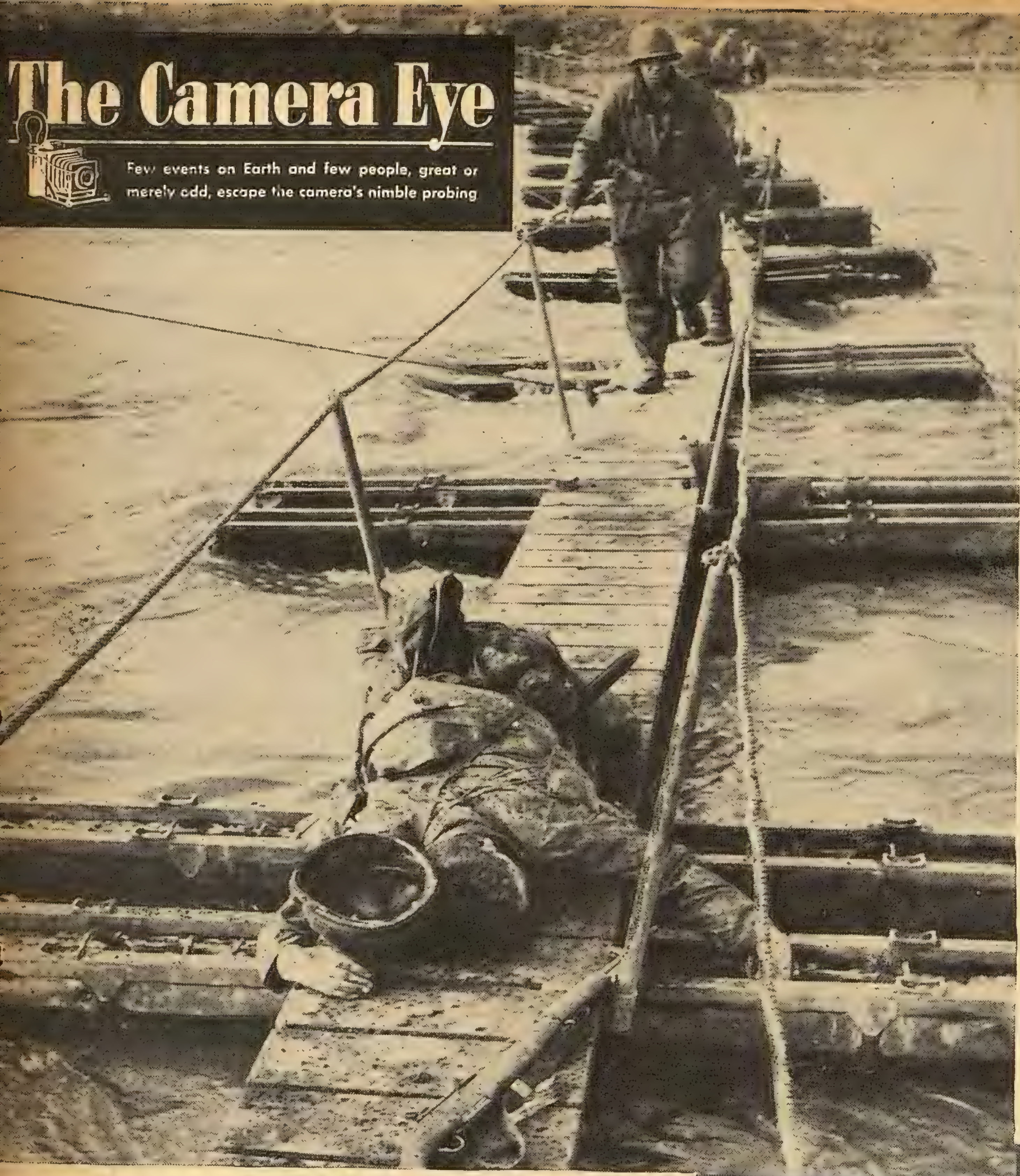
"Who knows, my love?" he murmured. There was a sardonic note in his voice, but his expression of detached calm did not change.

"Who knows, my love Marie?" he said.

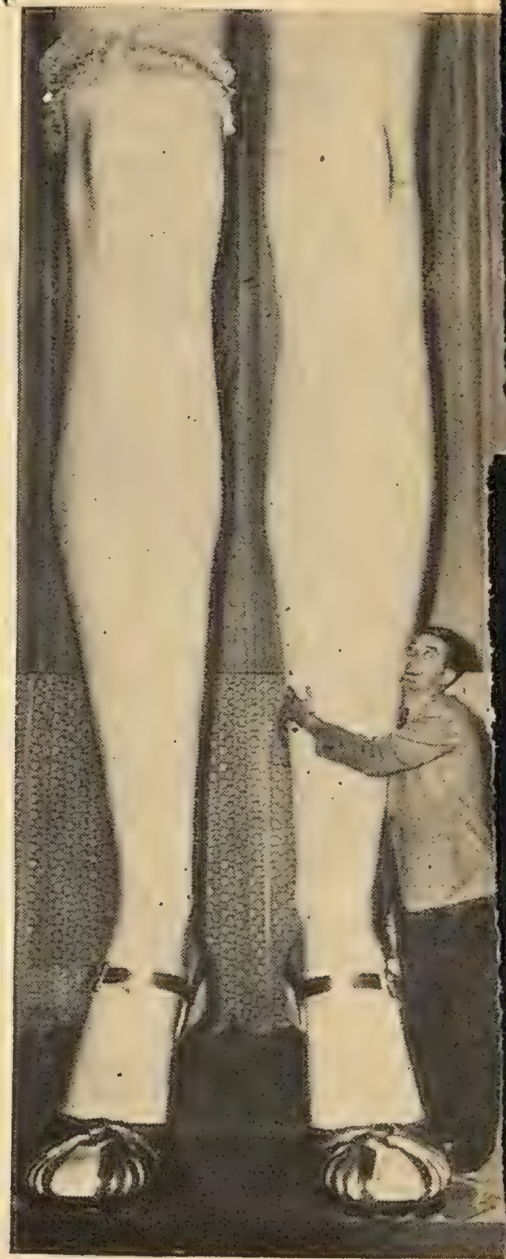
THE END

The Camera Eye

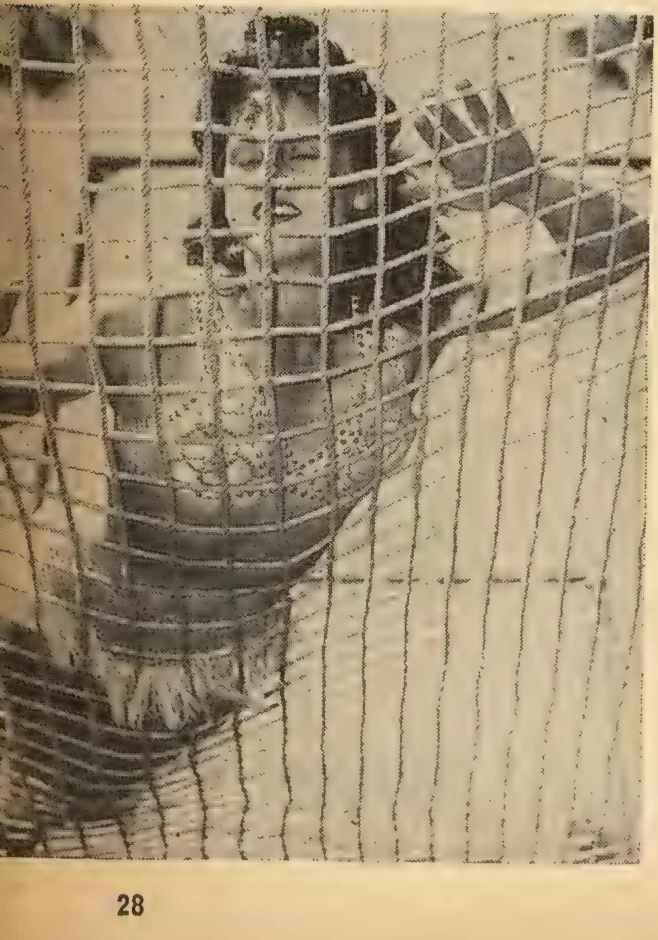
Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing



NO MORE RIVERS TO CROSS—Ju fifty feet from comparative safety ar the bank of the Roer River, this Ame ican soldier was struck down by enen mortar fire as he sprinted into German

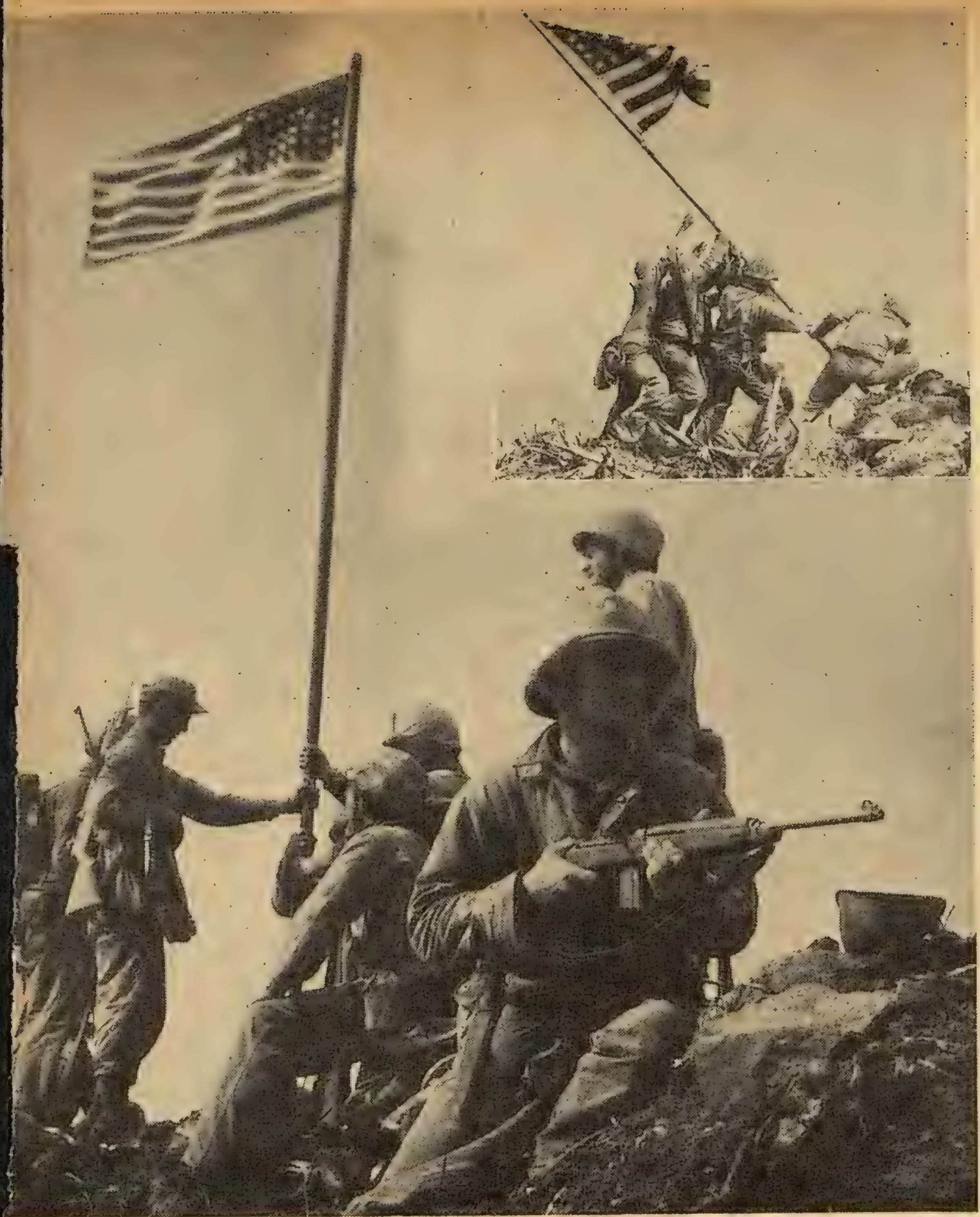


ACRES AND ACRES OF LEGS—A Hollywood photographer finally finds a cheesecake shot he can't take. No lady from Mars, it's a prop for George White's Scandals.



OOF!—Ernestine Clark, crack aerialist and one of Ringling Brothers-Barnum & Bailey's prettiest performers, limbers up for the 1945 circus season by taking a practice fall into the net.

ONE OF THE COMFORTS OF HOME—Using captured German materials, G.I.s of the Third Army rig up shower baths near Merchiad, Luxemburg —with hot and cold running water, and breezes.



HERE TO STAY—The small picture at top is already famous. But right after they aised the flag atop Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima, men of the 28th Regiment of he 5th Marine Division went back to work to make plenty sure it stayed there.

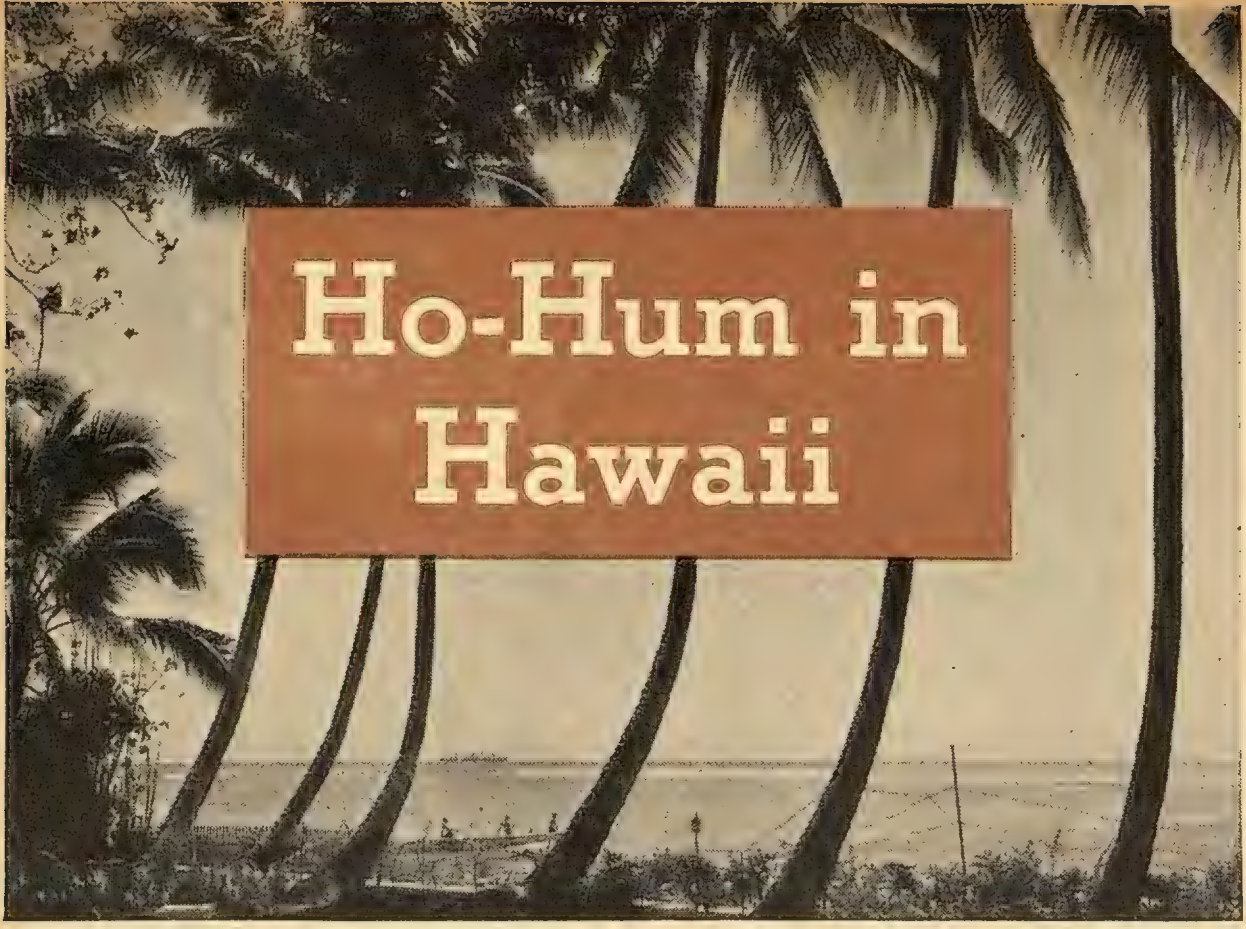
CASTOR OIL
CASTOR OIL
CASTOR OIL
CASTOR OIL
CASTOR OIL

WHAT A FUTURE!—Connie Grout expresses every youngster's dismay at this appalling prospect—4,000 gallons of castor oil the Army has for sale.

DON'T FENCE HIM IN—In this corner, with his hand on his—er—hip, is Martin Levy, wrestler, weighing in at 640 pounds. You heard us—640.

ROW, ROW, ROW—It may look funny to you, but these infantrymen of the U. S. First Army in Belgium are in dead earnest as they learn the proper way to handle their assault boat under fire.

Ho-Hum in Hawaii



Our Paradise of the Pacific is just Purgatory for the boys who are stuck there. Short on everything from females to phone connections, it's the frustration center of the world

By Lieutenant Robert C. Ruark, U.S.N.R.

Honolulu, Oahu, T. H.

THERE are several million wet, insect-chewed, hungry, muddy, and ragged front-line military men who will howl profanely at the suggestion that the island of Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, holds a large concentration of unpraised heroes who, although they will never fire a shot in anger or cringe at the whistle of a bomb, nevertheless are tasting a fat portion of the horrors of war.

According to the standards of a marine in a skimpy foxhole, with bullets singing past his skull, Hawaiian duty is a beautiful dream, composed largely of steaks, beautiful brown maidens, malted-milk shakes, swoon music, and magnificent vistas of sea and sky. But Oahu's well-fed, sharply creased warriors prefer to think of themselves as inmates of a de luxe hoosegow, a limbo between home and war which lacks the best features of both. They compare themselves with a lifer at Alcatraz, comfortable physically but tormented by the lights of San Francisco. All islands in the Pacific are called "rocks" by the G. I.s, but for Honolulu's lost battalions "rock" has a special significance.

There are no foxholes on Oahu. There is a sufficiency of food and drink. The climate is like none other in the world, and there are scenic excesses so heady as to make the casual observer slightly drunk. There is beer and ice cream and hot dogs, and a really fine steak may be had, for a price, at Mr. P. Y. Chong's on Ala Moana Road. Girls are no rarity on the island. And the *kamaainas*, or old-timers, still remember the prewar tourist brochures and steadfastly refer to their island as the Paradise of the Pacific.

But for the average semipermanent military visitor, beautiful Oahu, in addition to being the home of the hula, is a poinsettia-decked candidate for the frustration center of the world. War has made it into a Washington, D. C., with palm trees. Transportation is a nightmare. There is a shortage of everything except climate. A cream-cheese moon rises over a velvet evening—and the curfew knocks it in the head. There is a lack of housing which makes Washington hospitable by comparison. People, civilian and service, are stacked upon one another to a point where the island resembles an overcrowded elevator. The *kamaainas* resent the swarming newcomers, and the swarming newcomers would like to take the *kamaainas*, tie them in a sack, and drop them over the Pali. And always the steady stream of war-battered ships, contrasted to the brightly dressed fun-making civilians, pounds home the dismal fact that home and war are equidistant and equally unobtainable.

In a forward area life is highly uncomplicated. You wear no necktie and you roll your sleeves. A man may perspire unashamedly, and missing a morning shave is not considered a court-martial offense. Rawhide shoes and unpressed khaki are uniform of the day. Running water is a luxury; a tent with wooden sides and deck is a palace. A few bottles of beer is high living, and there are few feminine distractions. It is a good life that runs smoothly in a routine of work, eat, wash, sleep, read, and write. Happiness of a sort may be achieved, because the exile is not constantly reminded that once he, too, owned a wife, a car, and an ample stock of good liquor.

It is this constant flaunting of his civilian past which browns off the temporary resident of Hawaii. Having been rudely plucked by war from a civilian status, he looks forward to the excitement of combat or the comparative simplicity and mental peace of an advanced base, and, instead, finds himself plumped into a humming extension of the Pentagon Building.

Having sternly made up his mind to eschew all fripperies until *après la guerre*, he is dumped into a gorgeous tropic vacation land whose tantalizing enticements he may look at, but may not touch. He wears the uniform and draws the pay of a fighting man, but the petty annoyances, restrictions, and deprivations he suffers are those of a stateside civilian. After a few months of Hawaii, the meekest Milquetoast of them all is apt to stow away on an LST bound for the nearest Jap-held isle, and after three trips on a Honolulu bus, a ninety-seven-pound yeoman second class, armed with nothing weightier than a rolled copy of the Honolulu Advertiser, would joyously leap into a Jap pillbox.

The greatest single frustration of Honolulu and environs is, as you might suspect, vested in the feminine population. To the unpracticed eye, Honolulu seems to be seething with femininity. A stroll down Waikiki, or a saunter in the sands fronting the Moana or Royal Hawaiian hotels, reveals a bumper crop of beautiful dames: civilian government employees from the States, lovely slant-eyed Jap and Hawaiian creatures with faint infusions of Portuguese, and now, since Navy has slackened its regulations, Waves and lady leathernecks as well as WACs and nurses.

This optical abundance of pulchritude causes the newcomer's heart to leap, and it is not long before he begins to think seriously of a social whirl involving the opposite sex. Only then does the barbed-wire barrier to boy-meets-girl reach out and snag him in the pants. Such is the numerical superiority of male to female in Hawaii that the plainest of *wahines* becomes obsessed with the delusion that she is a composite Grable and Lamarr. So great is the demand, and so puny the supply, that the suitor, unless he is willing to contract for the lassie's society some days in advance, might just as well go back to the barracks and curl up with a book.

If the would-be Lothario *does* meet a girl and is willing to make a date for Tuesday next week, he suddenly discovers that feminine companionship generally is limited to those who have (1) transportation, (2) a place to entertain a date, (3) a blackout pass, and (4) free daylight hours, which pretty definitely restricts the field to high-ranking officers, civilians, and war correspondents. Moreover, he finds that in order to prosecute even a trivial romance he is bucking Army and Navy regulations, the 10 P. M. curfew, the most fiendish telephone system ever devised, the housing shortage, the transportation shortage, and the fact that there are but twenty-four hours in a day. When the military established the curfew, some soulless brass hat completely ignored young love. With the last bus back to base leaving at 9.30 P. M., billing and cooing take a frightful beating.

Not long ago some *kamaaina* wrote one of the local papers that he never saw young lovers strolling the moonlit beaches any more, and commented rather bitterly that young blood had thinned considerably since *he* was a blade. Young blood has not thinned in Hawaii, but young blood does not wish to be shot in the seat by some trigger-happy sentry who has been reading too many stories about submarines and rubber boats and saboteurs who land on beaches. Also, after you've taken a girl to dinner, you've barely time to get her home before the M. P.s begin to prowl, and you find yourself nicked ten bucks for violating the curfew.

It is possible, when a serviceman is wealthy enough and miraculously lucky enough to acquire a beach apartment and a car, to cut a swathe in Honolulu's social life. There is a high-flying set, sometimes enviously referred to as the Waikiki Bums, which parties extensively (when liquor is available) and generally conducts itself after the gilded fashion. But social life for the average junior officer is tough, and for the enlisted man it is damned near impossible.

BY way of illustrating a few of the pitfalls in the path of romance in today's version of the Paradise of the Pacific, I can cite the pathetic case of a young officer who decided he was tired of the monastic life in a BOQ (Bachelor Officers' Quarters) and who essayed a fling at the flame. A dance was to be given at one of the officers' clubs, and in order to attend it was necessary for the young buck to wear whites and be accompanied by a woman. No size, shape, or age was specified, but the female companion was mandatory, or the man at the gate wouldn't let him in. This insistence is a wartime measure to prevent the wolves from turning a sedate function into a rat race.

The young man spent a week lining up a blind date. He spent several days scrounging a jeep. At the last moment the laundry failed to deliver his whites, and he had to steal a suit, the coat of which cascaded nearly to his knees and was cut along the lines of a damp blanket. Ten minutes before he was to leave Pearl Harbor to pick up his date, somebody grabbed his jeep, and he had to dip into crime and perform what the Navy calls a "moonlight requisition."

It took him nine hours, from the time he left Pearl until he returned from taking his lady fair home, and of that time he spent only two and a half hours in the damsel's company. The rest of the time was consumed by the mechanics of going and coming, which included two arguments with M. P.s, arrest on a charge of jeep stealing by a native policeman, a long stay at Shore Patrol headquarters waiting for an officer to act on his case, and getting lost twice after he finally was sprung. And his companion, he reported the next day, had buck teeth and the sniffles, and was passionately interested in social work.

After a few such experiences the average young serviceman of Oahu concludes that romance is for civilians and Air Corps officers, and retires moodily to the movies for his recreation. There have been instances where men met pretty girls who owned cars and apartments, but treasures of this sort generally are kept manacled to the stove during the hours when the lucky lad is shuffling papers for his Uncle, and are never displayed publicly, for fear of hijacking.

If a veteran member of Oahu's Lost Battalion were asked to list, in order of importance, his chief sources of annoyance, he undoubtedly would name (1) the telephone system, (2) the laundry situation, (3) the transportation system, (4) *kamaainas*, and (5) his job.

Compared with Honolulu's telephone system, the notorious Parisian phone is simple. Strong men of sober habits, after

(*Continued on page 72*)

THREE LIONS, OFFICAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOS

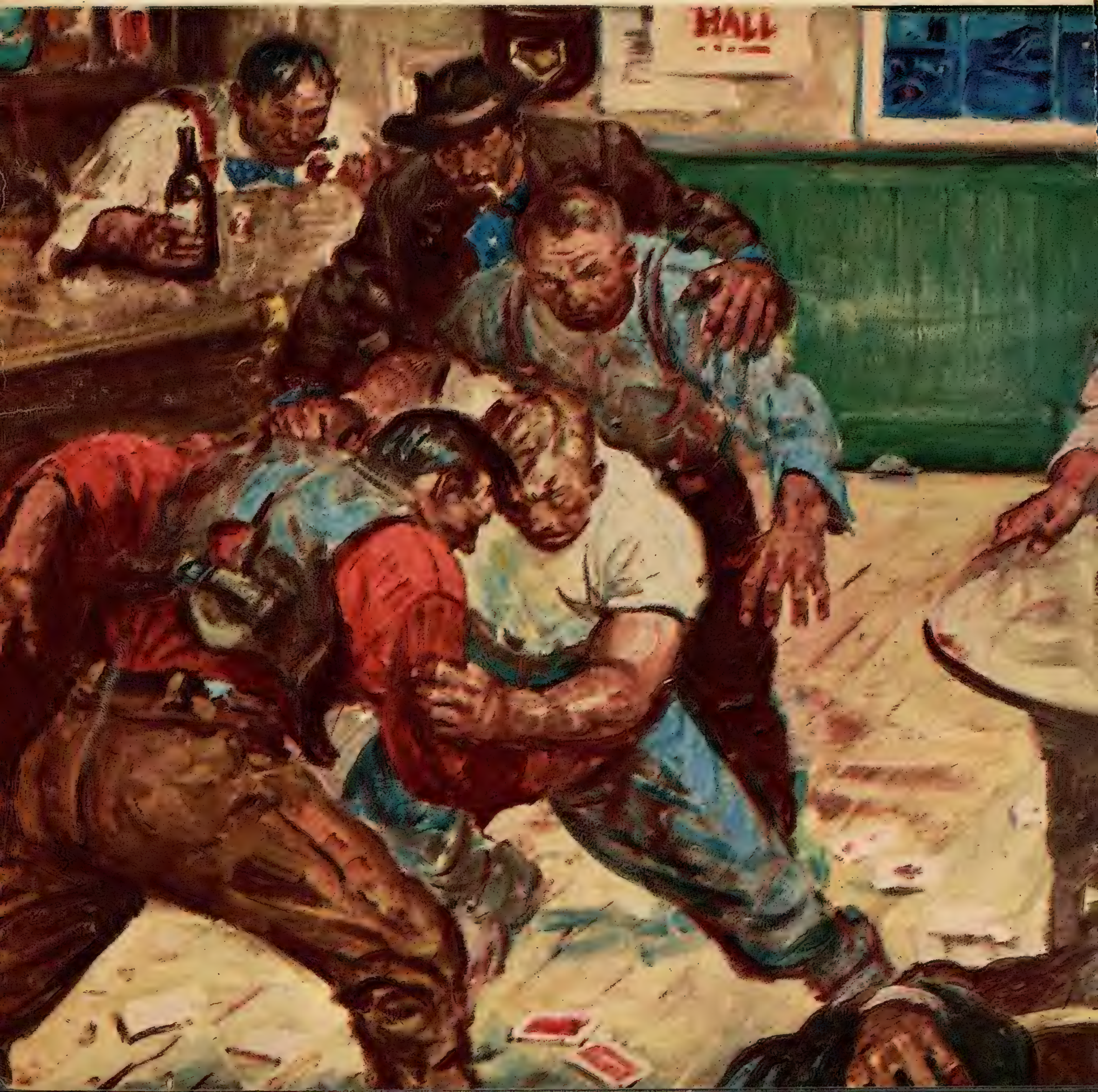
The sailors drinking beer at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel are enjoying the wildest spree to be had by the ordinary G. I. or gob in Hawaii. Badgered and bored by life in this Pacific Pentagon, few of them ever get to see the gals or the good times being relished by the barefoot Navy flier and his pals—in Honolulu for a breather between battles.

Brains vs.

Sometimes a dumb guy is harder to figure than one with brains—like Bronski, the big bohunk who could bust up a barroom singlehanded, but had a yen to be a "good thinker" instead

BY MARY LESLIE HARRISON

LLUSTRATED BY BENTON CLARK



Bronski

ON payday Saturdays the three of us would go down to Steve Pop's in Outcrop and get drunk. Steve's was the only place of its kind in that sooty little coal-mining community stuck away in the hills, and every payday he did enough bootleg business to close his doors for the rest of the half. Of all the men in Outcrop, I guess Steve had the best of it. No coal loading, no checkweighman cheating the scales, no washing black dust down with cold coffee. All he had to do—besides serving an occasional thirty-day sentence to oblige the state cops—was to open the hatches on payday Saturdays and let the men's hard earnings hit the till.

I mention Steve's because it was at his place Stanislaw Bronski pulled one of his dumb ones. The big dumb bohunk—always wanting to be a good thinker! He was a great ox of a fellow, all hulk, and why, with that set-up, he wanted a head on him, too, I don't know. A dumb guy is as hard to figure sometimes as one with brains.

The night we wrecked Steve Pop's joint, the Bronk and I left the boardinghouse with enough bullion lining our pockets to buy the place out of bootleg for a couple of paydays to come. Jan Kopec had gone on ahead—like us, with a wad of dough to match his thirst. It'd been a good half, with the mines rolling thirteen days of the two weeks, and we'd put in some overtime besides, which adds up. But I knew what would happen to Bronski's payroll if one of Steve's bleeders got him in an ante game and if, as usual, I'd tied on one too many to watch him.

"Here, Bronk," I said to him, going down off the hill toward Steve's, "give me that roll. Nobody's bustin' a chair over my head tonight because you've been frisked by five aces."

The warm April wind held a taste of smoke from the slate dump. It was a dark night.

Bronk and I knew the path to Steve's place like the parts in our hair. When the path dipped to zigzag down another rib, I stopped and told Bronk again to hand over his roll.

"Come on," I ordered, "the roll."

He fumbled around for his voice. "All? Boffalo neeckels even?"

"The roll, Polock, just the roll."

"Maybe I couldt keep tan, fifteen, maybe fife dollars?"

"You wanna start something with that dough?" I asked sourly. "You with fifteen dollars should be insured."

It took him another couple of minutes to get the idea. Finally it sank in, and he handed me a wad that felt thick as a paper-back thriller.

"You bat, Alex," he said admiringly, while I crammed his dough in my pocket. "You're smart man, Alex. Leetle, like I couldt broke you op with one handt, but so smart as avertink."

He kept on admiring me as we went down the path, and even coming from him it sounded good. When a little guy like me buddies around with two man-sized meat eaters like Jan Kopec and Stanislaw Bronski, he begins to notice the difference in size. The only thing about me that awed Outcrop even a little was the Bronk on one side and Jan Kopec on the other. But to Stanislaw I was the original strong man in the head.

He started telling me again about that "falla from Pantslyvania," interrupting himself every few words to chuckle reminiscently. In the five years I'd buddied with the Bronk I'd heard that story no less than twice a week, and I could count on it for Sunday.

"Falla come from Pantslyvania, broke inside from woman. 'W'at the hell?' I tal him. 'Is goodt time for gat dronk, for maybe fight, for gat in chail.' He's Roosian falla, he's no goodt for laugh an' be happy. He's only want to sit wit' wodka, an' cry, cry. W'at the hell? Woman's woman. Averbody know how woman is." He chuckled. "Pretty soon I mak' him madt. I tal him, 'She no goodt, your woman, for mak' you like this. She badt, I tal you.' *An' w'at you tink?"*

Here he always held up the story until I'd said something. For the thousandth time I repeated, "He tied into you."

The Bronk chuckled behind me. "Sure tink. He's got real madt, an' fight me. Then soon as avertink is all right he's tal me, 'Is goodt contry here for mak' money, for fight an' gat in chail. I forgat her, this woman, an' pretty soon I am dronk anyhow—so w'at the hell.'" With one last chuckle the Bronk finished. "That time I am smarter as him; I mak' him forgat."

I could see the lights of Steve's place now, and forgot all about the Bronk's story. He couldn't stand it any longer.

"I'm pretty smart that time, huh?" he asked anxiously behind me.

"Sure thing," I said, and gave him what he wanted. "A guy like that, you got to do his thinking for 'im."

At the foot of the hill we turned up the hollow, following the crossties. Steve had his place on the fringe of company property, just beyond the tipple where the railroad swerved away into the outside world. I could hear, ahead of us, the sounds of a payday Saturday in full swing.

IT was Jan Kopec's laugh that boomed out loudest at us when we walked into Steve's. He was a carousing wallop of a fellow, a guy with an immense joke. When he looked around and saw us, he shoved up from a table and came towering toward us through the crowd.

"My frans!" He brought one great clop of a hand down on my shoulder and bounced the other one off Bronk. "One beeg dumb Polock an' one *leetle* small Wast Wirginian," he bellowed. "My frans, eat an' drink an' wish tomorrow you could die. That's life, my old man says."

"Your old man's dead," I said.

He grinned down at me, cocking his trick right brow. "Sure. W'at else you axpect if he drink himself to death?"

With Jan Kopec on one side of me and the Bronk on the other we forged our way to the back room. The mines were idle this payday, and consequently Steve's was bulging with bonanza, the day shift and night shift cramming his weather-boarded jack pot to the seams. Scarred tables spilled over with splashed liquor and burly men.

We bought our bottles from Steve in the back room and drifted around. A few games of so-called blackjack were going on, with Floyd Ult and "Please God" Perkins cardsharping for Steve, and I knew from the look on Bronk's face that he'd try to cut himself in. So I siphoned him out some of his dough.

He looked at me like a big, overgrown, anxious kid, afraid I'd change my mind. "Sure tink?" he said.

"Sure thing. But you lose that, and there won't be any more where it came from. Understand?"

He grinned all over his broad Slavic face and piled himself into a chair. It was the same as getting hijacked of that much cash, and I knew it, but I thought, well, hell, he's earned a little fun.

He was in a game—and what that meant to him showed all over the big lug. Holding the cards close to his chest, he straightened his big hunched shoulders and I could almost hear him chortling inside himself, "Is beek joke, Alex, how I'm feex them wit' *these* cardts—an' good thinkink besides!"

THE cork was still in my bottle and I was feeling woed down with a lot of things, so I went over to a table and sat down with Jan Kopec and Joe Kick and some others. For the next few minutes I sat sampling Steve's rawhide and tried to figure why, when he always got stripped down to his gears, the Bronk kept on in dogged eagerness playing cards. It must have been that getting in a game gave Bronk the feeling of matching wits with some of the sharpest fleecers in the business. Ha!

I tried to keep my eyes on the Bronk and my mind off him. It was his money, wasn't it? Every few minutes he looked over at me and flapped an eyelid down in a wink and grinned from one broad cheekbone to the other—still dumb and happy.

A little later Steve's was beginning to go and come in waves. I'd succeeded in blunting out some of the things that bothered me, and the whole room was an insulation of noise and crowded confusion.

Once or twice, by shutting my eyes and opening them a few times, I saw Mike Federoff over in a corner talking to Steve Pop. For all I knew, he was telling Steve how he'd been laying for me ever since I kissed his woman at a Polish wedding—Mike's woman and Mike's wedding. It'd all been done in the spirit of the occasion, but Mike had got red-rimmed about the eyes when I'd tried to circle Josie's several waists and kissed her where she stood, swarthy in her bridal veils. Maybe he was telling Steve he'd get me tonight.

Next thing I knew, something roared around me like an explosion of dynamite in a seam of coal. It was Jan Kopec, laughing. He shook me with a big paw.

"Hey, Alex! Wake op! Laugh! I mak' joke about boarding missus. She's want

(*Continued on page 76*)

"Bronk," I said, "Bronksi—" He squared around and met Mike head on. They bounced together and rebounded.

Tailor-made Vegetables

VEGETABLES are being made to order for you today. Popcorn with more pop to it; onions tailored to your taste, mild or pungent; watermelon for Northerners; tomatoes easy to raise; peaches for people with stomach trouble; thornless blackberries; strawberries sweeter than any now grown; cabbages with twice as much vitamin C as oranges—these are only a sample of the good things in store for you.

They are no haphazard finds. To get them for you, plant explorers scour far-off lands from Tibet to Tanganyika, from Siberia to Siam. And at home, hundreds of today's Luther Burbanks painstakingly cross one variety with another, test and select plants for generation after generation, and sometimes toil for twenty years over one onion or Lima bean.

Take those new tomatoes, for instance. They were developed to save you heartbreak.

Too strong a term? Not if you've ever set out a gardenful of plants, hoed them, watered them, watched over them, and then—just as you were counting on a home-grown feast—seen them wilt and collapse to a shriveled heap.

That won't happen to you now. The new tomatoes are practically immune to the killer called "fusarium wilt."

More than ten years ago scientists started to build you these plants. They combed the world for odd varieties. They gathered seeds from the West Indies, Central America, the slopes of the Andes. Not one could stand up to the wilt.

Then, in 1931, on a sugar plantation near Trujillo, Peru, G. N. Wolcott, one of Uncle Sam's explorers, saw some fruit flies taking a siesta on sugar-cane leaves. Wolcott was puzzled. Why fruit flies where there was no fruit? He searched the underbrush for the answer. He found it—a scrubby little vine with berries no bigger than his fingertip, the Andean currant tomato. It didn't look like much, and most of its berries were gone, devoured by the flies. But he managed to scrape together a handful of withered seeds and shipped them off to Washington.

It proved a real find, a tomato most exceptionally "field-immune" to wilt. But only a fly could enjoy its currant-size fruit. So plant breeders set out to put its fighting blood in a fine big tomato. They succeeded. First with Pan-America, a tomato you can plant in your Victory garden this very spring, and again with at least one other tomato so new it is still unnamed, is only now being tested in seedsmen's gardens, and won't reach you till '46 or '47.

There are new varieties of lettuce, too. How would you like a summer-long salad in one plant? That's a good deal to hope for; but a "cut-and-come-again" lettuce that keeps its leaves tender several weeks longer than usual will be yours next year. Its name is Slobolt, and it won't shoot to seed at the first sign of a dog day. Strip off one rosette of leaves and it puts forth more for another day.

Down at Beltsville, Maryland, Dr. Ross Thompson has a greenhouse full of its cousins, all the different kinds—romaine, iceberg, lobe-leaf, Boston, and even a brand-new kind, frilly like parsley but pale iceberg green. All of them are as long-lived as Slobolt but not quite ready yet for release.

While you're waiting, though, you can enjoy a lettuce that was introduced to a few gardeners last spring and is available now to all. It is Great Lakes, an iceberg-type variety that makes a head even in warm weather, doesn't burn or wilt, and stretches your salad season two to three weeks.

Onions, too, are up to new tricks. Soon you'll be growing onions twice as big as today's and of any flavor you like, from mild and sweet to bitingly pungent. If you live in California, Utah, or Nevada, you can get in on the first of these tailor-mades: a mild white-fleshed redskin called California Hybrid Red No. 1. More kinds are on the way, each fitted to the climate and soil of a different region and each suited to a different taste.

So important an achievement are these hybrids that they won for their originator, Dr. Henry A. Jones, the Vaughan Research Memorial Award.

Other hybrids are ready for you now. Plant breeders have long been aware that a hybrid, even though sterile, can turn out bigger and better vegetables than an ordinary plant. But what stopped them cold was the job of producing hybrids in quantity. For, just as it's necessary to cross a mare and a donkey each time to get a mule, so it's necessary to cross the plant parents each time to get hybrids.

There are two stumpers in this cross-pollinating: First, the flowers may be so small you need sharp tweezers, a magnifying glass, and a hand steady as a surgeon's to transfer the pollen from one parent to the other. Second, you have to be sure the plant doesn't become fertilized accidentally with either its own or other plants' pollen carried by wind or insects.

If you have ever looked at the tiny flowers of an onion you can appreciate what an impossible job it would be to hand-pollinate them one by one and produce hybrids enough for American gardeners. But Dr. Jones found a way. Twenty years ago, in an onion patch in California, he discovered one freak: a plant that never produces pollen but can produce seed when cross-pollinated. From that one male-sterile plant he has developed hundreds of others. Because of their male sterility, there's no chance of self-pollinization. So he simply plants them next to a row of ordinary onions and lets wind and bees do the cross-fertilizing.

When plant flowers are big enough, cross-pollinating, though laborious, can be done by hand. With cucumbers and melons, gardeners go through the fields the day before the flowers are going to open and seal them shut with paper clips. Next day they open the flowers, dab on the pollen they have chosen, and seal the flower again with a cellophane capsule. Safe against air- or insect-borne pollen, the seed grows, pushing off the capsule as it matures.

Midget watermelons, onions that don't bite, and popcorn with more pop to it—these are already available to U. S. gardeners. But what plant scientists are coming up with next will *really* make your mouth water

By Priscilla Jaquith

OUT this spring is the first hybrid tomato plant. It means bigger and more uniform crops of tomatoes on exactly the same amount of land and with less struggle. In tests last year it began yielding fruit days before ordinary tomatoes; was still yielding long after the others had stopped. Twenty-two college girls made this hybrid possible. Last summer they got up every morning at six, worked all day on a Doylestown, Pennsylvania, farm, laboriously crossing plants by hand. Result: thirty-three pounds of seed, so precious that only thirty seeds can be spared to a package, to make sure there's enough to go around. From their labors, too, comes a hybrid cucumber, so sturdy it can lick a trio of diseases—mosaic, bacterial wilt, and downy mildew—that threatened to destroy the Eastern cuke industry a few years ago.

And there's a new sweet-corn hybrid: Goldengrain. Tender and flavorsome, with deep milky-sweet kernels on extra-large ears, it's easy to grow, the stalks sturdy as field corn and eight feet tall.

Then there's popcorn with twice as much pop to it. Don't fill the hopper with this hybrid. It explodes to thirty times its original size. The bits of fluff are tender, too, many with no core at all. And they come in party patterns: butterfly shapes and mushroom styles. What's more, the corn is easy to raise, turns out half again as many ears as common kinds. But here's the joker: it's proved to be so valuable a discovery that already every bit of this year's 150,000 pounds of seed is spoken for.

Strangely enough, many of the plants from which your best vegetables come are ugly wild varieties gathered from all over the world by men of the Department of Agriculture's Division of Plant Exploration and Introduction. One of their most famous finds was the plant which has helped to improve almost every variety of spinach. Yet it looked like nothing but a wild dandelion when the late Frank N. Mayer discovered it near Liaoyang in northern Manchuria back in 1920.

Today, breeders at the Department's Bureau of Plant Industry are enthusiastic about another wildling found in Peru. "It's a horrible hairy thing," says Dr. Victor Boswell. "It smells like stinkweed and it sprawls all over the ground. It doesn't look anything like a tomato, yet it's a distant cousin and resistant not only to fusarium wilt but to streak, another tomato scourge." Dr. Boswell hopes for big things from this and from another Peruvian with the jaw-breaking name *Lycopersicon Peruvianum.* It's homely, and its berries are green. But it can stand up to diseases that ravage tomatoes. For three years breeders struggled to cross it with a tomato, finally producing a plant that bears fruit in all sorts of weird sizes and colors—pink, green, and pale yellow. They don't even know yet whether the plant will be fertile. It may be a hybrid with, in Boswell's words, "no pride of ancestry or hope of posterity." But, just the same, it's worth a try.

AND don't get the idea the scientists won't reach their goal some day. For example, fifteen years ago pickle packers complained that cucumbers were too curved to pack easily. They went to Dr. George Star at the Michigan Experiment Station, told him they wanted a streamlined cuke. "All right, gentlemen," he said. "Draw me a picture of what you want." They sketched him the shape, life size. He folded the paper and stuck it in his pocket. Three years later he called them up: "Your pickle is ready. Want to come over and see it?" They came, looked at it, and pulled long faces. "It's too short," said one. "It's too slim," said another. Dr. Star reached into his pocket and pulled out the paper. "Here's the picture you drew," he said mildly. "Pick a few cucumbers and measure them against it." They did—and the cucumbers matched, line for line.

Since then, Dr. Star's "National Pickle" has been superseded by others, as straight and slender but tougher-skinned, to travel without bruising. Newest of these was launched last spring—Cubit, a cucumber that also stretches your cuke season two weeks by ripening that much earlier.

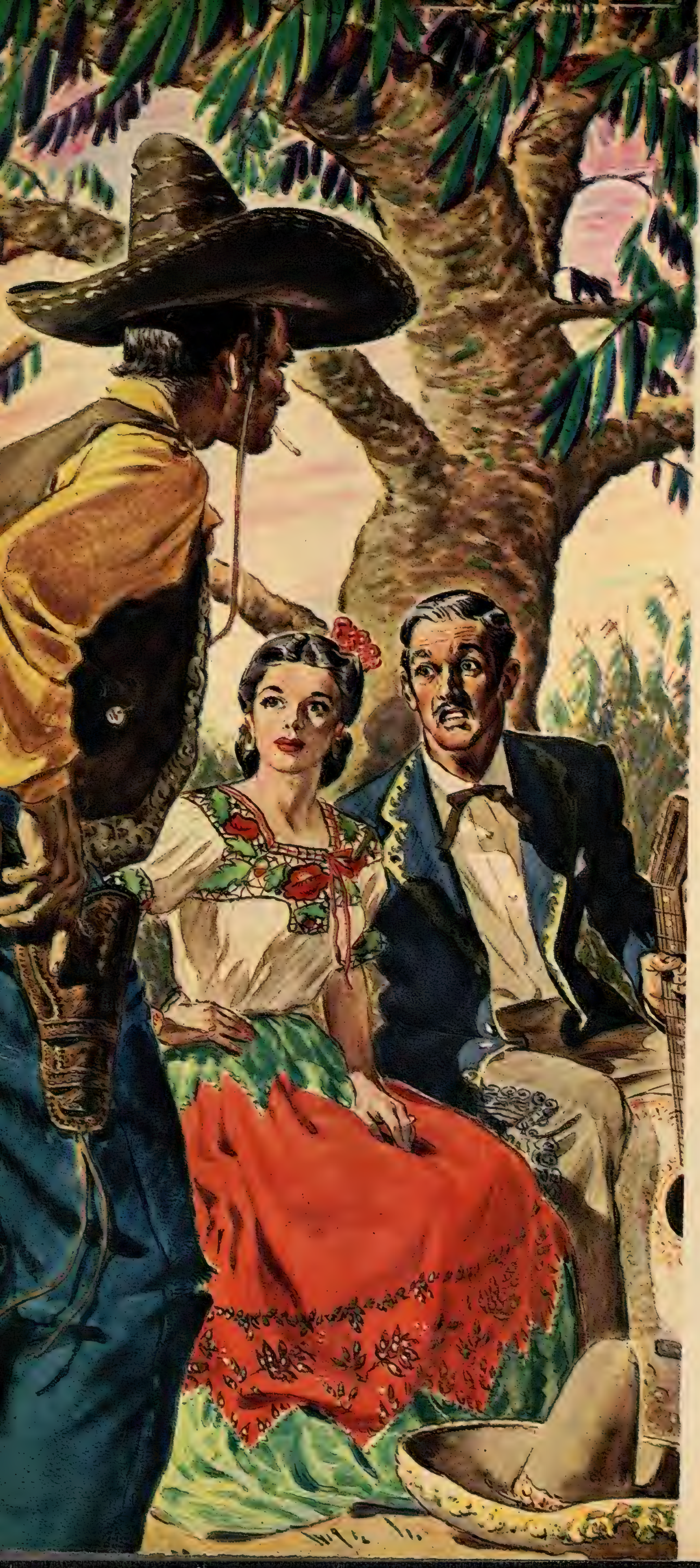
Dr. Boswell thinks it really takes about five years to see how good new vegetables are. As illustration, he tells the story of Break-of-Day, a tomato heralded as a great find back in 1931. For the first two years it lived up to its reputation as a heavy yielder; then, in his words, "it blew up like a punctured balloon." What happened was that for a couple of years the skies were mostly overcast, ideally suited to Break-of-Day, which carried its tomatoes exposed to the sun. Along came a few hot sunny summers, and Break-of-Day left, for good. Its tomatoes couldn't stand the sun.

Quite the opposite happened to Pritchard, intro-

(*Continued on page 83*)

KODACHROME BY F. F. ROCKWELL; PHOTO BY PURDY, U. S. D. A.

At the Bureau of Plant Industry, pollination of onion plants is carried on by flies imprisoned in little cellophane bags.



Juan

As he jogged along through the warm summer twilight, Juan Ibáñez was a very happy *caballero.* Why shouldn't he be happy? Had not the gentleman in the How Many Saloon treated him and his horse Diablo to a drink a few minutes ago? Was he not on his way to see his *novia,* Rosita? *Ay!* he needed no more to fill his cup with happiness.

Juan blissfully hummed an old Spanish love song as he rode into the yard of the adobe *casa.* He was about to call out a gay word of greeting, when he saw a sleek dark man sitting with Rosita on the bench beneath the spreading mesquite tree. The greeting died on his lips and the song went out of his heart.

"Buenas tardes," Rosita said with a flashing smile. "Is it not a fine evening?"

Juan dismounted and stood holding Diablo's reins, staring sullenly at the slim *caballero.* He did not like his wealthy neighbor, Señor Roberto de Alvarez. Señor Alvarez' clothes were always too neatly pressed, his black wisp of a mustache too smoothly waxed, he looked too *clean.* Name of a name! Who could trust such a man as *that?*

Señor Alvarez put down the silver-studded guitar he had been strumming. "I am glad to see you, Juan. Rosita and I have been talking over a proposition."

Juan laid a hand on the butt of his six-gun. *"Ladrón!* Would you steal my sweetheart from under my nose when I am looking the other way?"

Señor Alvarez whitened and looked nervously at the gun. Rosita laughed and put a restraining hand on Juan's chest. "Foolish one! The proposition concerns you." Suddenly she sniffed suspiciously. "You have been drinking!"

"It is Diablo's breath you smell. As we were passing the saloon, a gentleman insisted on buying him a drink."

"You did not take one too?"

"Pues," Juan shrugged. "Could I let Diablo drink alone?"

"Well, no matter. You must listen to Señor Alvarez' proposition."

Señor Alvarez was smiling suavely.

"You and I have had our little differences, Juan, but I am willing to let bygones be bygones. I want to offer you a job."

"I do not like to plow," Juan said stiffly.

"Who spoke of plowing? I am offering you a job in my bank. I will teach you the banking business."

"Why should you do this?"

"I cannot handle all my business alone. And when the irrigation project gets under way I will need a clever partner."

Juan had not heard of the irrigation project and he listened with interest while Señor Alvarez explained it to him. A large fruit company planned to build a dam and irrigate the desert surrounding Tres Rios. Already land agents were in town buying up right of way for the canals which would carry the water down from the mountains. Property values would rise five, ten, perhaps twenty times, Señor Alvarez declared, and wonderful profits were to be made dealing in land.

Juan laid a hand on the butt of his six-gun. *"Ladrón!* Would you steal my sweetheart from under my nose?"

Becomes a Banker

Juan, the gay caballero, and Diablo, his hard-drinking horse, take a flier in high finance—and mix in some highway robbery for a dividend

BY BILL GULICK

ILLUSTRATED BY AL SCHMIDT

"How," Juan asked, puzzled, "does one make money from land without plowing it?"

"By speculation."

"I do not know how to speculate."

"I will teach you, *amigo*. Well, shall I expect you at nine in the morning?"

Nine o'clock seemed very early to get up just to go to work, Juan mused. Still, he needed money badly, for Rosita was firm in her determination not to marry him until he could support her. Why she was so unreasonable he did not know. But if he worked a while, he might become rich, then Rosita would marry him and he could retire.

He sighed. "*Si*, I will be there."

JUAN was only an hour late getting to the bank next morning. As he rode up the street, he saw that news of his new position had spread about Tres Rios, for the citizens nodded to him with a look of respect in their eyes. Even Sheriff Hoss Perkins had a kind word for him.

Juan tied Diablo at the hitch rail in front of the bank. "If you are good, my little turtle, I will buy you a pick-you-up when I have finished working."

Diablo gave a bored snort and cocked a meditative eye at the How Many Saloon across the street.

Señor Alvarez was not in the bank when Juan went in, but Charley Parks, the chubby good-natured teller, took him in hand and showed him how banking was done. In the teller's cage were stacks of crisp new bills of various denominations and piles of gold and silver coin. When customers came in, they gave the teller a slip of paper with figures written on it in exchange for corresponding amounts of cash. Other customers brought in money, for which they were given slips of paper. Juan liked that kind of customer better; he did not see how a bank could make any money when it gave all its cash away.

Señor Alvarez and a thin-faced brusque man came in shortly before noon. Señor Alvarez nodded to Juan, then went into his office with the thin-faced man.

"That's Mr. Cuddy," Charley told Juan. "He's a big land agent."

Juan supposed that Mr. Cuddy and Señor Alvarez were talking over a scheme for making money with land. He wondered when Señor Alvarez was going to start teaching him how to speculate.

Mr. Cuddy left after a few minutes and Señor Alvarez called Juan into his office. "Well, my friend," he said with a smile, "how do you like the banking business?"

"It is all right," Juan answered, "but I do not see how you make any money."

Señor Alvarez laughed. "You will see soon enough." A serious expression came to his face and he leaned forward, lowering his voice. "I have an important mission for you. Can I trust you?"

"But of course!"

"I want you to take five thousand dollars to the bank in Mesquite Plains. No one must know you are carrying the money. Do you understand?"

"*Si.*"

"*Bueno.*" Señor Alvarez put five thousand dollars in crisp new one-hundred-dollar bills in a briefcase, closed it, and handed it to Juan. "You will leave at once. Deliver this to the cashier at the Mesquite Plains bank. And remember, be *very* careful."

Juan smiled and patted his six-gun. "Do not worry. No *bandido* will rob Juan Ibáñez."

Donning his sombrero, he left the bank and untied Diablo, who was dozing in the warm noon sun. He put the briefcase in the saddlebags and was starting to mount, when a friendly voice called, "Juan! *Un momento!*"

Turning, he saw Ramón, a dark gay-eyed *vaquero* who worked for Señor Alvarez, coming up the boardwalk. "Ah, my good friend Juan!" Ramón said breezily. "I have heard of your good fortune to become a banker. It is my pleasure to congratulate you."

Juan was a little surprised, for never before had Ramón been so friendly. He shrugged. "It is nothing."

"Ho! How modest you are! Come, I will buy you a drink in celebration."

"I do not know if I should. Señor Alvarez—"

"He will not care. Have I not worked for him these ten long years? Often have I seen him leave his work to enjoy a drink or a glass of wine. Come; for your horse also will I buy."

If Señor Alvarez indulged, Juan meditated, why shouldn't he?

He went across the street to the How Many and had one drink with Ramón. The slim *vaquero* insisted on having two fingers of tequila and a pint of water poured into a wash basin for Diablo, and Juan did not object. After all, one little pick-you-up could not hurt anybody.

"Another drink?" Ramón said as Juan finished his first.

"No. I am riding to Mesquite Plains on an important mission."

"That is a long ride. A very dry ride, too." Ramón bought a quart of tequila and gave it to Juan. "A present for you," he said with a wink.

Juan felt very pleased with the world as he put the bottle of tequila in the saddlebag and rode out of Tres Rios. He would not drink it now, but after he had completed his mission the bottle would help to shorten the long trip back.

The trail passed by a miserable adobe hut surrounded by several sandy acres of land. A shabbily dressed man was squatting in the scant shade. Juan called out a friendly greeting and the man looked up.

"Hello, Juan," he said without enthusiasm.

Juan reined up, puzzled.

"What gives you trouble, *amigo?*"

Pancho Treciado lifted his shoulders in a weary shrug. He was a small, stooped, sad-eyed man. "It is my brother," he said.

"He is ill?" Juan inquired.

"No. He has inherited a profitable business from our rich uncle who has died."

"That is good news."

"*Si.* But my brother writes that I should bring my family to Saltillo and go to work for him in this profitable business."

"That is even better news."

Pancho sighed. "*Si.* But my mules they have died and so cannot pull my wagon to Saltillo."

"Then you should buy more mules."

"I have no money. I have tried to sell my farm, but no one will buy. That *ladrón* Señor Alvarez controls all the money in the county and he knows that soon taxes will come due, and if I cannot pay them the county will take my land, then he can buy it merely for the amount of the taxes."

JUAN rolled a cigarette, scowling. He could not believe that Señor Alvarez could be so unjust.

"At what price did you try to sell?"

"Very little. Only five hundred dollars."

Juan thought of the five thousand dollars in the briefcase. Señor Alvarez had much money in the bank, so much he probably could not even count it. Undoubtedly the bank in Mesquite Plains also had more money than it needed. Who would miss five hundred little dollars?

"I will buy your farm," he said.

Pancho looked up, startled. "*You?*"

Juan opened the briefcase and counted out five one-hundred-dollar bills. "Here. Now write out a paper saying I have bought the land. I will give it to the man whose money this is."

Pancho looked dazedly at the crisp new bills and his eyes started swimming in tears of gratitude. "Juan, you are a good man. I do not care if you did steal this money—to me you are a saint."

Juan felt embarrassed at so much show of emotion and gruffly told Pancho to write out the paper. There was nothing available to write on other than Juan's sheaf of

(*Continued on page 66*)

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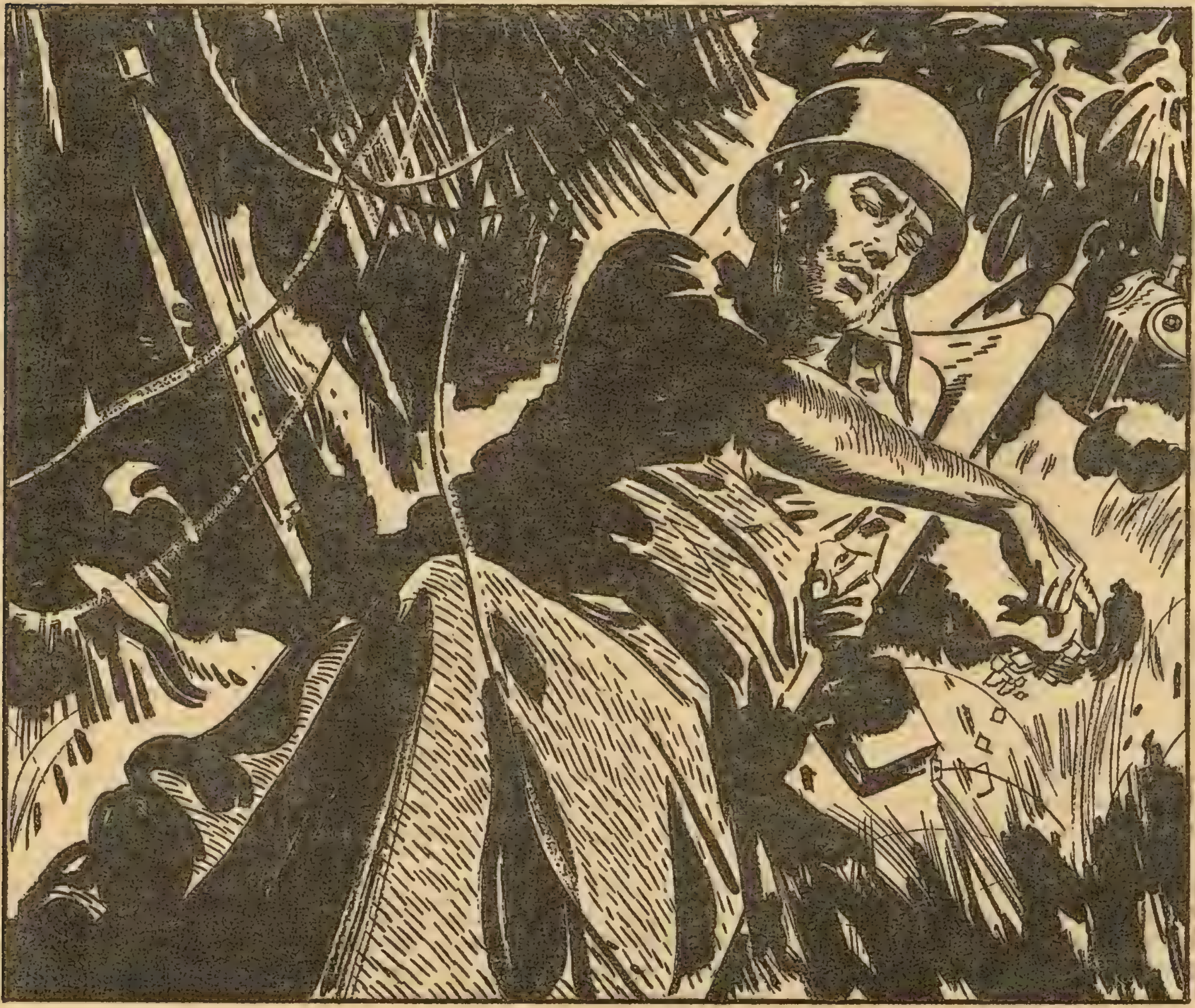
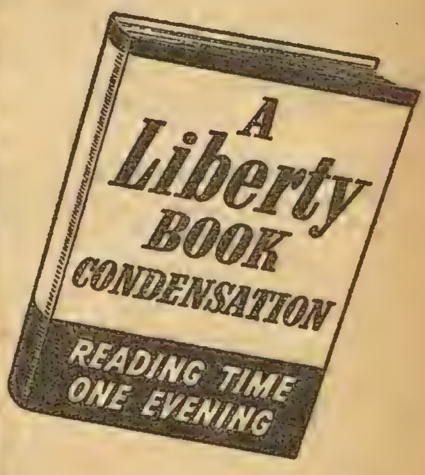
THEY DREAM of HOME



BY NIVEN BUSCH

ILLUSTRATED BY GLEN THOMAS



THE bumping of bodies and valises on the door of the drawing room of the train roused Cliff Harper from his dream of home-coming. He had been away at war. This was his first glimpse of Los Angeles in nearly two years. He turned from the window, a look of wild excitement on his face. He was a gangling, big-jointed young man in the uniform of a private of Marines.

"Hey, you guys," he said, "we're in."

The announcement drew little reaction from his two companions. One was asleep on his drawing-room divan. He was Matt Klein, a Marine corporal with a broken nose and a mop of wiry red hair pulled down partially over his forehead.

The other occupant of the compartment was a master gunnery sergeant—a pot-bellied, powerful man in the middle fifties. He wore the World War I, China, and Haiti ribbons and nine of more recent origin, including five battle stars. Each of his companions wore the Silver Star, but the sergeant had the Navy Cross.

"Take it easy," he said. "They haven't opened up the doors yet. Anyhow, it's women, children, and civilians first. You guys sit tight before you get trampled in the rush."

As he spoke there was a knock on the compartment door and a corpsman put his head in.

"Could you fellows give me a hand with him?" he asked.

He looked anxiously from Cliff to the sergeant. The sleeping corporal, hearing a new voice, opened his eyes, looked at the corpsman, and went back to sleep again.

"We'll have to take him out through the window," the corpsman said. "I hate to ask you fellows, but I'll need some help."

The sergeant cleared his throat.

"What do you mean, you hate to ask us?"

"I just figured you'd be getting off the train, sergeant," the corpsman said. "I figured you'd be in a hurry."

"You figured wrong," the sergeant said. He took no further notice of the corpsman, who, after a moment, withdrew his head and closed the door.

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Matt Klein was now sitting up. With one grimy hand he pushed his hair back from his forehead.

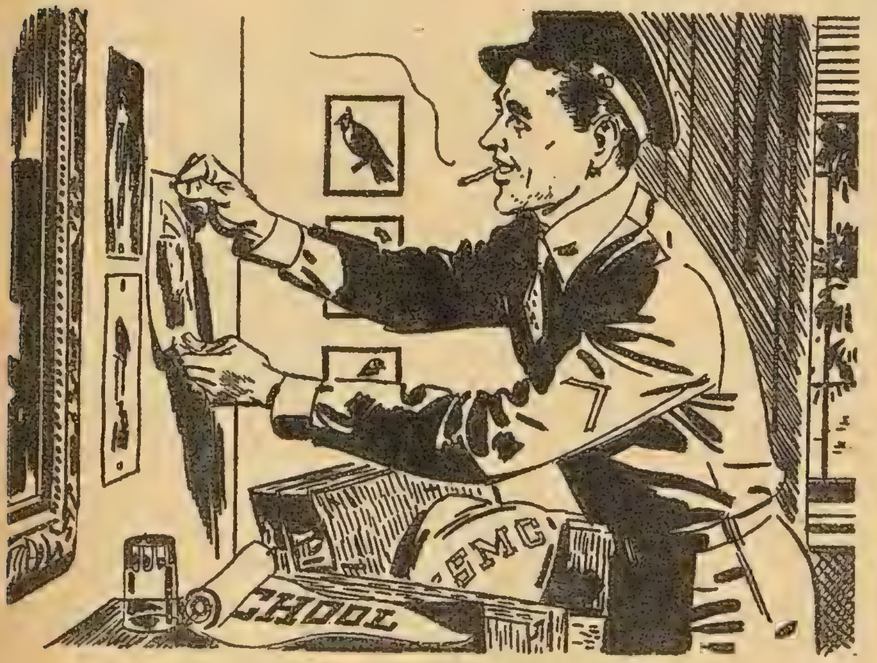
"What'd he want, Gunny?" he inquired of the sergeant.

The sergeant, staring straight ahead, made no reply. Matt shifted his gaze to Cliff, who said, "Wants us to help get Perry off."

The sergeant reached into the rack over his head and pulled down three sea bags, piled so that by jerking out the under one all three dropped almost simultaneously into his arms. He shoved one at each of his companions, then opened the door. Passengers were streaming from the train now.

Cliff and the sergeant moved along outside the car. Here, at a window where the corpsman was visible, they stopped, while the window was opened and the screen removed. Now the corpsman leaned out, glancing up and down the platform over the heads of those passengers who, sensing that something unusual was about to be enacted, had collected around Cliff and Gunny.

Far down the platform a lieutenant of the Navy Medical Corps had issued from one of the tunnel entrances of the station and was bearing down on the group. With him were a corpsman and a couple of civilians, one a tall saturnine individual carrying a camera with a flashlight attachment; the other middle-sized and very dapper, with an Irish face and a tough city manner.



Instead of the lieutenant, to whom everyone was looking for authority, it was the Irishman who immediately took charge.

"Stand back, *please*," he snapped in a voice like a race starter's. "There's a wounded man in that compartment—he'll need air." Turning to his tall associate, he demanded, "What do you think, Pop? Can you get it while they pass him out?"

The tall man shook his head and an argument ensued, the tall man backing out into the now awed spectators and focusing his camera on the window. Meanwhile, after a low-voiced conference between the medical lieutenant and the corpsman, the end of a stretcher appeared in the window and was seized by the upstretched hands of those below. An operation which had begun in fumbling had somehow become skillful and even merciful; with hardly a tremor or jar, the stretcher was miraculously freed from the train, was being carried toward an ambulance waiting in the parking lot at the end of the platform.

The Irishman trotted up beside Cliff, who was walking with long strides, his arms hanging straight at his sides and his head bent down.

"You Harper?"

"Yes, sir."

"The old guy is Gunnery Sergeant Earl T. Watrous," the Irishman stated, consulting a slip of paper, "and the wounded Negro is P. Kincheloe."

The reporter consulted his list.

"Kincheloe, Klein," he read. "Where's Klein—Corporal Klein?"

From slightly behind the stretcher a coarse grating voice said, "Here! I'm Klein. What do you want?"

"Just checking," the Irishman said. "Say, lieutenant, could we get a picture as they lift him in?"

"You'll have to make it fast," the lieutenant said. "This boy is going to the hospital."

The tall man, somehow cut loose from his morose speculations, already had the picture.

Inside the ambulance, where he lay on his stretcher, nothing could be seen of the wounded man but the outline of his head, stiffly held upon the tiny pillow of the stretcher, the eyes open, glistening with a white and secret shine, the face turned to one side.

Once more the tall man backed off with his camera, facing the three marines now lined up at the rear of the ambulance.

"Thanks a lot, fellows."

Cliff blinked. There was a click behind him; he whirled around. Both corpsmen were in the ambulance; one of them had pulled the step up and was now closing the door. The driver started his motor and the ambulance drove out onto the street. The marines stood together on the platform, watching it weave through the traffic.

"We can go out to the hospital and see him," Sergeant Watrous said.

"Sure," Matt said. "Wednesdays and Sundays is visiting days. I asked the corpsman."

Cliff's eyes—small and rather somber eyes set under protective juttings of strong bone—searched Matt's face. He was committing to memory this information as to the days he could see Perry. He had planned to say good-by to the black boy, but they had taken him away too fast. Still, as Matt said, he could go out and visit him. It wasn't as if old Five-by-Five were really separated, cut off from the Group.

That was one thing that would never happen. They were not going to be cut off, none of them. This they had decided coming from New Caledonia, and also at Mare Island, where they had gone through further doctoring to fit them for civilian life. They had been together too long and they meant to stay that way; having enlisted from Los Angeles and hence being discharged in the same area would, at least, make this a good deal easier.

There was no sense roasting yourself, standing in the sun—no rhyme nor reason to spend the rest of your life beside an oil smear that an ambulance had left on the clean pavement. Led by Gunny, the three men began to walk slowly along the now deserted platform. In the tunnel that ran under the tracks, they walked a little apart. It was as though the separate worlds to which they were now moving had stretched partitions into the tunnel, dividing them from one another.

THE tunnel swerved up and ended, abutting suddenly on a clear space fringed with faces behind a rope. With a curious throttled cry, a small gray-haired woman ducked under the ropes and threw herself on Gunny; just behind her stood a very neat, flabby man around thirty years old and a handsome young woman who was holding by the hand a stocky child of three or four. Disengaging himself from the woman's embrace, Gunny was immediately engulfed in this waiting group. Cliff turned to look for Matt, but the latter was already at the end of the roped area, walking with his arm around a bandy-legged man in a sport shirt.

Cliff was alone. There had been no time for good-bys. All in a second his two comrades had been seized, removed by other concerns. He set his sea bag slowly down, his eyes never stopping their search for the persons whose presence would give him an anchor.

Had there been a mistake? Could the telegraph operator have got the time wrong in the wire he had sent?

Cliff's nerves fluttered. The shaking which had bothered him since his last combat experiences started up again; he could feel it in his hands and wrists. Anxious to steady himself, he gripped his thumbs with the other fingers of each hand. Clearly he was young to be wearing the uniform he had on, let alone his campaign ribbons and decoration. In spite of his height, his lanky powerful build, and his man's face with the marks of suffering and resolution on it, he looked unfinished somehow, as if he had been conceived in a great mold, embodying a noble and distinctive purpose of his race, and then, half through the processes which would have fulfilled the design, this purpose had been changed or forgotten and he had been dumped out to shift for himself. Leaning his sea bag against his knee, he fumbled in his blouse, got out a handkerchief, and wiped his face. He was wondering whether to wait where he was or find a telephone and ring his parents' house.

He had just decided that the proper thing to do was to stay where he was, at least for another five minutes, when someone touched him on the shoulder. A man—a well-dressed stranger, wearing steel-rimmed glasses and a tan linen suit—stood before him, holding out his hand. Only as he shook hands, saying "Hello, dad," did Cliff perceive that this stranger was his father.

Meanwhile a middle-aged woman in a blue print dress, with a hat falling off the back of her head, clutched him round the body with one arm, trying with her free hand to grapple his neck and pull it down in order to kiss him.

"Cliff, my boy, my son," she said. She began to weep, dabbing nervously at her eyes while people standing near by looked at her with sympathy.

"Hello, ma," Cliff said. He looked from his mother to his father in an embarrassed friendly way, making an effort to get used to them.

"Doggone," he said, smiling at each in turn. "Gosh darn it all. I was commencing to think I'd missed you."

THUS, on a pleasant day in July, a hero came back to his own city. He rode through the streets in the family automobile, a well-washed and sizable but somewhat shabby sedan, sitting in the back seat with his mother while his father drove. His mother had her arm through his and kept on looking at him all the way home.

"You're thinner, Clifford," she said several times.

Since there could be little argument on this point, he offered none, except to venture at length, "It wasn't so bad, ma."

This seemed to strike the wrong note. His mother turned away. Tears sprang to her eyes.

"Don't talk about it, Clifford," she said. "I know you don't want to talk about it."

This statement surprised the hero; he was quite ready to discuss any subject whatever. Moreover, he did not know to which his mother had reference. Not wishing to offend her, however, he refrained from talking and the rest of the trip was passed chiefly in silence.

Rapidly, as the Harper car wound through the streets, the tall somber buildings of the business district fell behind; the streets became narrower, the houses residential. The car was passing places now which the hero knew well; they looked different, smaller for the most part, or shabbier, but still undeniably right, full of intimate messages. And then they were on The Street, and then there was The House, squarish, secretive, unchanged. The house had a curving walk, a sharply sloping roof, a porch crouching in a large sweep round the parlor windows. It had four rooms downstairs, three upstairs, and a hedge of Cecil Bruner roses on one side of the yard. The paint was a little shabbier, the lot had shrunk a little, but the Cecil Bruner roses were in bloom and the lawn had been mowed.

It was all right. It was home.

Mr. Harper put the car in the garage while Cliff and his mother went in the front door. He set down his sea bag and loosened the top buttons of his tunic.

"How does it look, Cliff?" his mother said, surprised at his long silence. "Does it look the same to you?"

And he answered, "Fine, mother. It looks just fine."

Upstairs, Cliff made a mistake. He did not notice what his mother wanted him to notice, namely, that his prized possessions had not been disturbed in any way. On the desk was the engineer's drawing set he had been given when he was fourteen. Over the bed was a high-school pennant, and on the walls were framed snapshots of himself and various friends.

"I didn't have to get the room ready for you, Cliff," his mother said. "It has always been ready. Any day or night you came home, you would have found it this way, just the way you left it."

Cliff was vaguely uncomfortable, and his mother sensed this. She explained to him that he was tired, that he should lie down and take a rest. She kissed him and went out of the room, closing the door.

Cliff took off his blouse and walked about the room, trying to get used to it. After a while he took the prized possessions which his mother had left out and put them in drawers. This helped some, but not enough. The hero lit a cigarette and thought it over, and he got an idea. From his sea bag he took an oil-silk package which contained photographs of each of the marines who had been with him on the station platform.

Cliff stuck the pictures on the wall with the thumbtacks which had supported the high-school pennant. Then he lay down on the bed to study the results. Thoughts which had gone through his mind over and over in recent weeks came back with added force. Every one of these guys was a great, a wonderful guy.

But being wonderful guys wasn't enough. They would have to stick together. That was the important thing.

His experiences of the past now emphasized this truth so that there no longer seemed the slightest doubt of it. Here he was at home, just where he had wanted to be for months, and he had found he was a stranger here. He was back on the street where he had lived before, in his own room, with his own family—and yet those guys were the only guys he felt at home with. Even having their pictures on the wall was important.

If they stuck together they could get through anything, do anything. This he knew beyond a doubt. It had been proved to him a thousand times.

THE order had come through at sixteen hundred of a sopping dismal September evening. The Marine regiments occupying the southernmost tip of an island had been harassed for days by shells from a six-inch field piece which the Japanese were firing from a tall ridge in the center of the island.

Hence the order, which was a call for a demolition patrol. A runner took it to Lieutenant Cole, a three-month wonder straight from Quantico. Lieutenant Cole went down the creek to look for Gunnery Sergeant Earl T. Watrous and told him what had to be done.

Any patrol on that island was apt to fall to Sergeant Watrous. Watrous had been a marine for over twenty-six years. He had campaigned in China, Haiti, and Nicaragua, and it was known also that he was a grandfather and had a wife and two grown sons back home, one of them a lieutenant in the Navy. There even had been some silly talk, before the division left San Diego, that old Gunny was too stiff in the joints to climb down landing nets. But Sergeant Watrous had put on such a show during the weeks before embarkation that Colonel Brennerhan had no choice but to bring him along.

Technically, a patrol of this kind was supposed to be made up of volunteers, but Sergeant Watrous had a special method of inducing applications. He picked out the men he wanted and told them what they had to do. These were the volunteers.

They located the field piece, killed the sentries guarding it, and destroyed it with dynamite. They were on their way back when heavy firing broke out in the direction of the base and it became evident enemy vessels were shelling the beachhead and the installations behind it. For the rest of the night the patrol stayed where they were. About a hundred yards from the spot of jungle in which they were lying the enemy had recently bulldozed a road, and over this through the next several hours Japanese units moved up in the rain, supporting the assault which was co-ordinated with the landing action.

By morning it was evident that both elements of the enemy plan had been at least partially successful.

During the night the patrol had suffered two casualties: Pfc. Hugo Wrenn, 19, of Los Angeles, California, had been killed by a sniper, and Pfc. Clifford Harper had been wounded in the abdomen.

During the day the men used what was left of their water and emergency rations. Some prayed; some overhauled their weapons; nearly all of them slept. The danger of their position did not affect them seriously because all had confidence that Sergeant Watrous would find a way to get them out.

It was clear that if any move was to be made it must be made sometime during the night, their second night away from base. A stretcher was improvised out of a poncho and two sticks and Private Harper placed on it. Then the patrol slipped down the ridge. The going was very rugged, and after a couple of hours Private Harper requested to be left behind. For a while these requests were ignored, but as the night waned it was increasingly evident that before the journey could be finished Private Harper would be dead. As long as the stretcher was in motion his wound bled, though the bleeding seemed to terminate at intervals when the stretcher was set down.

Leaving a man who had been wounded on patrol was not an easy decision to make, but Sergeant Watrous had made such decisions before. He gave the wounded man a hypodermic of morphine, and left with him two units of ration D, the chocolate ration. Around Cliff Harper, in the darkness, the patrol made preparations for resuming their journey. There was no rebellion against the decision: the patrol accepted what had happened in the way that they daily accepted the events of battle—little by little, never completely letting the full thought of it into their minds.

WHEN Cliff Harper was a youngster he had a paper route. He had wanted a bicycle, and his father had made the down payment but told him he'd have to earn the rest himself. It was really for the joy of riding the bicycle as he delivered the papers that Cliff took the route. Thinking about home from the combat zones to which he was later sent, he had thought about the little houses as they looked in late afternoon, standing in quiet rows.

Quite often when the weather was hot in Los Angeles the Harper family went to the beach, taking a picnic lunch; they would go in their own car or double up in a sedan owned by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Tracy. Ed Tracy was president of the T-B Construction Company for which Cliff's father worked. The Tracys had a lot of kids, and the two older—Patricia and Jim—were about Cliff's age.

One year the T-B Construction Company handled a bridge job down in San Diego, and Cliff's father took him down there for a month. Cliff, who was fifteen at the time, made enough money to buy himself a Model A Ford, the motor of which he hopped up and the springs of which he cut down until it was a racy-looking job.

The year he got the car was the first year he had taken Pat Tracy out on dates. He sometimes thought that summer was the best he had ever spent; the nights especially were wonderful, warm and black, the gulf wind blowing and the palms bending and the kids going to parties in the little hopped-up cars. The Tracys had a house up at Lake Arrowhead, and Cliff visited them there.

Patricia Tracy was by far the best-looking girl in the crowd. She had long red hair and never wore a bathing cap. When she went swimming her hair would stream out in the water, which turned it a much darker color in marked contrast to her hard white lustrous skin.

Pat and Cliff had gone together ever since they could remember. Perhaps, in the beginning, it was just going to the same school, and Cliff and her brother Jim being such friends, that started them.

Pat had a good temperament: it took a lot to upset her. Having a lot of brothers had made her very practical and used to the ways of men. Jim was continually getting hurt in games, and if he had a Charley horse that really bothered him, Pat would rub it out with liniment. Several times, the last year that Cliff played football at Hoover High, he got himself bruised up in games and Pat rubbed out the soreness for him just as she did for Jim.

That was the fall of 1941. That fall Cliff and Patricia had been together more than ever before. They had an air of preoccupation which was new to them. It seemed important for each to probe the other's views on any subject clear through, to discover either agreement or disagreement. Thus a dialogue began, less a series of separate conversations than one conversation, continuous and rather serious, which ran all through the days and evenings of that season. If they were separated for a while, one would telephone the other and continue the dialogue, shortened now so that it was almost a code.

Patricia's good looks increased during that fall. She lost some weight, and the bone outlines of her face became clearly defined. She and Cliff went dancing at least twice a month, and when they danced their manner was withdrawn and serious like the dialogue.

Early in December the weather became brisk and there was snow in the mountains. Mr. Tracy said he would open up the Arrowhead house for the Christmas holidays and Pat and Jim Tracy, Cliff and several others planned to go up there.

As it turned out, there was no party in the snow. Pearl Harbor was attacked, and Cliff enlisted in the Marines. Jim had wanted to enlist also but could not because his father would not give him a letter saying he was seventeen instead of sixteen. Jim did not look seventeen, but Cliff did and he got away with it.

While Cliff was in boot camp Pat wrote him every day and he answered as often as he could. He hoped and prayed, he wrote her, that he'd get a furlough before he was shipped out. Pat was terribly disappointed when he didn't get it. She wrote and told him how bad she felt about it.

". . . Perhaps I should not say this, son, but I believe that girls sometimes do foolish things in wartime. . . ."

Some girls, maybe, but not Pat—not the Patricia Tracy who had written him those letters. Not that girl.

But there hadn't been any letters from Pat for three months. And his mother had enclosed the clipping from a home paper, saying that Patricia Tracy was married to Lieutenant Rorick Klim.

Cliff had read his mother's letter and the newspaper clipping several times, as if in hope that by constant perusal he would discover something in the words which would change their meaning. Deciding they meant what they said, he came to the decision that the best thing to do was forget about it. Put the whole thing out of his mind. Which, except for eighteen hours a day—the hours he was awake—was practically a cinch to do.

ON the outside chance, of course, there might be some explanation of the matter, he had kept one contact with his love. For several months, in the breast pocket of his tunic, he had continued to carry a snapshot of Pat. Sometime, Cliff knew, he would get rid of it. And he had finally done it. Lying on the stretcher after the rest of the patrol had moved away he fished the picture out of his pocket. It was wrapped in oil silk in order to keep it from falling apart with the rot which destroyed almost anything in that jungle—firearms, clothing, records, and the fortitude of men. Clifford Harper folded the picture and tore across the folded halves, and kept folding and tearing till he had reduced the picture to the smallest possible particles. He then made a small hole with his finger in the jungle earth, and he put the pieces of the picture into the hole and covered them with earth.

At this point the morphine began to affect him. He lost consciousness for a while, tapering down an endless tunnel into a shallow but oppressive sleep. When he woke again his mind was confused. Then the knowledge of his real plight came to him—like the memory of a nightmare—and despair seized him.

I humbly pray, do not let me die. Get me out of here. (Now isn't that the hell of a thing, Cliff thought disgusted; praying and hollering. Why can't you be a man, he thought, addressing himself. If you've got to die, then die like a man and earn some respect from God.) But this is no kidding. Being a man and sportsmanship and all that stuff, it's all baloney. This is me, Clifford Harper. This is it.

Don't let me die. Let them get me out. Don't turn your face away from me. Don't let me die.

The results of prayer may not always be perceptible, but in Cliff Harper's case they were quite satisfactory. Soon after he finished praying, the enemy landing party on the beach had been liquidated. During the following day Sergeant Watrous led a stretcher party back into the valley, and shortly before sunset Cliff was delivered to Doc Smart at his dressing station just below the ridge.

Two weeks later Cliff was removed to the base hospital at New Caledonia. Physically, he was already much recovered, but he was troubled with a nervous ailment which had set in as a result of shock, exposure, and prolonged strain. He stayed in New Caledonia six months, and while there his citation came through on a White House scroll, and he heard that all the guys on the patrol had received one, and that all of them, for one reason or another, were going to be discharged.

CLIFF, Matt, and Gunny had turned down Bush Street. They had no place particular to go; it was just a walk. This day in San Francisco they had begun by shedding their uniforms. Cliff had bought a tan Stetson, so light it was almost cream colored, a striped shirt, a light gray suit with socks to match, and box-toed shoes with a glossy store shine to them. Matt was dressed with equal swagger; Gunny, more conservatively in a tweed suit and darker hat. Yet Gunny had changed most of all. At Mare Island he had shaved off his full beard, and this made his face seem half the size it had been. In manner he was more subdued, apparently not being sure how to behave when disguised as a civilian.

To get the full feeling of being together, the three men walked abreast, unconsciously forcing passers-by to give way. Their cockiness, not unaccompanied by a bewilderment, was partly that of returned conquerors and partly the assurance which goes with possession of unlimited resources.

Matt Klein was preoccupied, but Gunny, like Cliff, was on top of the world. His face was wreathed in a big smile, and his voice, which had growled like a six-inch gun in combat and cracked like a bull whip in boot camp, had gone good-natured.

"Where we going?" Cliff demanded. "Where we bound for? I'm not interested in pounding the pavement."

"Now he's beefing about pavement," Gunny said. "One month ago, if it was mud up to his knees, he thought he was in clover, just so long as it wasn't over his head."

Cliff stood still and burst out laughing. It wasn't that Gunny's remark had been so funny, but today everything that anybody said seemed brilliant and apt, everything that happened had a hidden glory in it.

"Maybe you've got something at that," Gunny said as the stroll was resumed. "We could do worse than stop and buy ourselves a smile. I'm about ready."

"They won't sell a serviceman a drink till five o'clock in this state," Cliff said with an oracular air.

"Boy, what a brain trust I'm traveling with!" Gunny said. "So they won't sell servicemen a drink till five o'clock! What kind of clothes have you got on? What do you think you're out on, a three-day pass?"

Cliff looked sheepish. "Well, I'll be dogged," he said.

"You'll be dogged is right," Gunny said. "With a headpiece like you got, you don't have to be afraid of M. P.s—only truant officers. Brother, you're a civilian."

"O. K.," Cliff said, recovering. "What's holding us back? You want a snort, Matt?"

"I don't care," Matt said. "Whatever you guys say."

He walked along somberly, sunk in depression, as he had been all day. "I don't get it," he said at length, following the thoughts in his mind. "Something has happened sure as hell."

Matt's companions interpreted without confusion the sudden switch in topics. Bonds of their long comradeship enabled them to change effortlessly from lighthearted celebrants to sympathizers.

"Maybe she never got the wire," Cliff said hopefully.

"I wrote her twice," Matt said. "And I tried to phone her from Mare Island, but the number had been changed. If she's there she got the wire all right."

When they had boarded the ferry at Mare Island a few hours earlier, Matt had been the most exuberant of the three; since then his spirits had turned to dismal brooding. His wife, whom he had wired to meet him, had not shown up. On the island Matt had produced several snapshots of her—a full-bosomed blonde with a happy smile seated on a photographer's bronco, wearing a cowboy hat. Only when Matt's first pang of worry occurred—when he had failed to get an answer to his letters—had he confessed his marriage was the fruit of sudden impulse. He had met his bride in a cocktail lounge; the wedding ceremony, crowning a whirlwind five-hour courtship, had been performed the day before the transport sailed.

"I got an idea, fellows," Matt said suddenly. "This address where she's been living, it's over in Oakland. Maybe if we go over there they'll have some dope on her."

"Why, sure," Gunny agreed.

They were still together, all three of them, still a unit. They would operate as such. If the present mission concerned one of their number slightly more than the others, that was a mere accident.

"Swell," Matt said. The vast riches in his pocket made his choice in transportation automatic: though Matt had seldom in his life ridden in a cab, he signaled authoritatively to a passing yellow.

"Hey, hack!"

There was little talk on the drive to Oakland. But once across the bridge, a faint note of festivity was revived: at the direction of his passengers, the driver stopped at a liquor store. Here a bottle was procured and passed from hand to hand. Even the hacky himself was allowed a couple of swigs. By the time the travelers had reached their destination they were well equipped to deal with any situation which might have arisen in regard to Mrs. Klein.

The house was a disjointed frame affair. Cliff and Gunny stayed in the taxi while Matt talked to the landlady, a slatternly woman who stood half in and half out of the front door. When he came back his steps were slow. He climbed into the cab and slammed the door.

"Let's go on back," he said.

"She's moved, huh?" Cliff inquired after a period of silence.

"Yeah," Matt said. "She moved." He spat with precision out of the cab window. "She moved," he said, "the day she got my V letter saying I was coming home."

"How'd you find out?" This time it was Gunny who asked.

"Landlady told me. Those landladies in a place like that get smartened up. She was kind of suspicious on account of Doris getting letters under another name. She told the landlady she was taking letters for her sister, but the old dame suspected the hell out of her."

Gunny cleared his throat. Through a haze of pipe smoke he voiced the question no one had yet ventured:

"Was she getting your allotment, Matt?"

"I'll say she was," Matt said bitterly. "Fifty-seven fifty a month she was getting, from me and from how many other damn fools. Mrs. Allotment Wife! That's what she was. Oh, boy, am I a sucker! What a chump!"

"Have a shot, guy," Gunny said.

In the moment of crisis Gunny was once more the soldier-father of the jungle. He was taking care of a hurt son.

Matt glared at the three-quarters-empty bottle. He grabbed it and drained off the contents. Then he began a consideration of matrimony as an institution. With no small amount of clarity he made it evident that he regarded his connubial career as finished; he embraced the prospects of permanent bachelorhood.

"Amen, pardner," said the hacker in a rich bass. Since he spoke without moving or even seeming to open his mouth it was hard to be sure that the words came from him.

"Huh?" said Matt.

"I said, 'Amen, pardner,'" said the hacker. "I been hitched to two of them, and I'm with you."

"Amen, pardner," Cliff echoed. The phrase delighted him, though why it did was hard to say: its charm depended on the exact moment, on the way it had been spoken, and on the amount of liquor which he had drunk —and perhaps also because it condensed into a battle cry the instinct in all males to be free.

"Amen, pardner," he chanted. "Amen, pardner."

Matt was shaking hands with the driver. "Amen, pardner," he said. He shook hands with Cliff and Gunny, sealing them with the new-found catchword like fraternity initiates. Even Gunny, a married man for many years, forgot himself: standing on the seat, he pushed open the cab roof. With his head thrust out he yelled the magic slogan at a busload of shipyard workers, who responded joyously, not hearing what he'd said, or caring, but delighted at the sight of the gray-haired tough-visaged man who stood, his head through the roof of a cab, roaring with laughter and shouting words to the sky.

By some wonderful alchemy of comradeship, laughter, liquor, or the spirit of the day, Matt's suffering was gone. "Amen, pardner," he gasped, doubled up with Gargantuan mirth, crumpled in a corner of the cab seat while Cliff behaved similarly in the opposite corner and Gunny stood up with his head through the roof, yelling at the workers.

GUNNY heard the racketing trolley-car sound of a big shell coming. *Harrumpp!* It hit. . . . He rolled over in bed and pulled the covers over his head. There was something about the water pipes which made them sound off this way every morning.

No sense getting up yet. In the time he had been home, the Watrous family had established a routine about bathroom priorities. At first, with the early-rising habits of a lifetime, Gunny had mixed things up badly by trying to be the first up. He had even shaved, humming to himself in a gravelly baritone while slippers shuffled in the hallway at the bathroom door and impatient fingers tried the knob.

Now he knew better. He drowsed while daylight filtered through the sheet over his eyes as through the top of a tent. From the kitchen came the subdued clink and stir of Emmy's breakfast-getting. At Tientsin, in the Compound, and in Panama where Bobby was born—in all the posts and stations where they had lived together —Emmy had been the first one up, and she was still. She would look a little stooped, just coming out of sleep, and patient with the early-morning patience of a woman getting her befuddled menfolk ready for the day.

There were sounds in the front bedroom which Emmy shared with Dot, wife of the absent lieutenant, and with the baby, Sonny. Dot would already have whisked in and out of the bathroom; she would be dressed now, talking mother talk to Sonny, giving him his orders of the day while she took off his nightshirt and put on his clothes.

There was a thump in the second bedroom, then the splash of water running in the bathtub. Gunny grinned. That Harry, taking a bath every morning! To Gunny, there was something laudable though slightly effete in such frequent bathing. Yet who would do it the way Harry did, except Harry? Harry's bath was lukewarm, not a Spartan dash of cold, the way Gunny had seen Old Silvertop, his colonel in the Haitian campaign, take it in front of a tent, standing there naked while his orderly dumped a bucket over him. Not even hot, as a luxury-loving man, spoiled by easy living, might enjoy it. Just lukewarm, no pain or pleasure of any kind.

Gunny was not happy in bed. Would Harry never get out of there? But Emmy had asked him not to start an argument. . . .

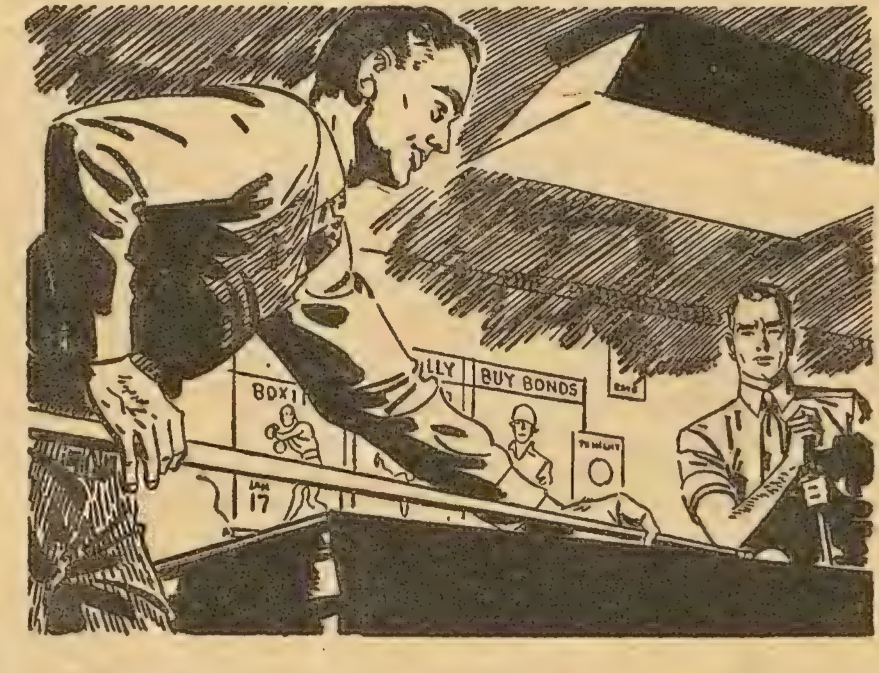
It was strange, when you came to think of it, how often Emmy was Harry's spokesman; if not that, she was his interpreter, explaining actions or ideas which Gunny, as Harry's father and head of the house, objected to. It was almost as if she sided with Harry against him, as if Harry, his own son, had supplanted him.

Take his room, now. When he had known that his discharge was coming through, he had written Emmy to get ready. She had been living at the San Diego base, but she had moved up to Los Angeles, where Harry was working, and with his help they had found the house, a five-room frame bungalow on a corner lot.

Emmy had written Gunny all about the house, and though he had never seen it till the night he got off the San Francisco train, if he had walked in the front door in the dark he would have known where everything was; he could have gone straight to the big front room, the one which he and Emmy planned to use as their bedroom.

That was just it. The house was plenty big enough for Emmy and himself. That was what he had been saving his pay for all these years, so that he'd have a place to live in when he got through. But you couldn't foresee that Harry, living with his mother temporarily, would have become a substitute head of the house. As for Dot and the kid, it was wonderful to have them, even if the baby had to have the most sun, the most air, and hence the big front room. Of course the two women had to be in there with him. Two old people couldn't live there with the kid and put his mother in the hall nook. . . . And catch Harry, a high-wage earner like he was, taking the nook. How would that have looked?

Thus Gunny, home from battle, found his allotted piece of Shangri-La the hall nook in the dove-gray bungalow. Here, through the print drapes which served him as a door, he listened to the morning noises, hearing at last—and with enthusiasm—the click of latch and slap of bare feet on linoleum which meant that Harry was through with the bathroom.



Gunny dressed in leisurely style. Shaving could go till tonight or tomorrow night if need be. As he issued from his cranny he collided with Dot, rushing from the dining room. Gunny slapped his daughter-in-law on the backside, and she, after feinting a punch in return, put her arm around his waist and planted lipstick on him.

"That's so Emmy will know the way you act."

"How about another?" Gunny demanded amiably.

Dot dodged deftly around him. She had on a denim work suit, trim on her strong young body. Pinned in the V of the blouse was a defense-plant work badge.

"Take good care of Sonny," Dot said.

"I'll keep him in line, don't worry."

Dot was gone, dashing out of the gate to catch her ride. Removing the lipstick with his handkerchief, Gunny entered the dining room. Harry was sitting at the table, reading the Examiner and eating cereal and milk.

The automatic egg boiler clicked to indicate that Harry's two-minute eggs had severed contact with the water. Gunny watched with some repulsion while his son unshelled his entrée. What gooey food the guy ate, mush really. To Gunny, no egg was really palatable until turned over and fried to the consistency of leather.

From the eggs, Gunny's attention switched somewhat covetously to the paper.

"How'd the Angels do yesterday?" he inquired.

Harry silently handed over the sports section, thus keeping his father quiet until Emmy hurried in to provide her husband with nourishment.

Harry, never in a hurry, stood up leisurely and started toward the back door through the kitchen, where he paused for a low-voiced colloquy with Emmy.

This daily morning conference, always conducted at a pitch inaudible to Gunny—but only barely, tantalizingly inaudible—displeased the sarge more than any other feature of his life as a retired hero. While it went on was the time each day that he really felt helpless, old, useless, and somehow displaced, an outsider in his own home.

This talk was the daily Watrous staff conference—but Gunny was not in on it. Harry stepped formally into his new and mysteriously gained position as head of the house. He and Emmy were talking over what to get to eat, or, rather, Harry was indicating his preferences while Emmy nodded and listened and made mental notes and sometimes a suggestion, while she looked with proud eyes at her eldest son arrayed for his day in the great world. There was a click as Harry unsnapped a wallet, carried always on his person: he was doling out ration stamps.

BREAKING up toast and mopping up the last egg yolk and bacon, Gunny heard Harry open the garage and start his car. A moment later he drove past the window. The car was spotlessly clean. Harry also was glistening and polished, prosperity-bespeaking in spite of his glasses, his frugality, his mush-absorbing stomach.

In that brief glimpse of his son, Gunny recovered from some measure of his chronic annoyance. Harry was plenty smart to be where he was at twenty-seven—chief accountant of the Nuway Plastic Corporation, with an assistant treasurership in sight. His eyes had handicapped him all his life, making him play second fiddle to Bob, but he had turned the handicap into an asset. He had studied. He had risen. Harry might be an old maid in some ways, but he'd get married some day and get over it. He even had a girl friend, Miss Bopeep Lipsitch of Azuza, a female accountant. They might name the day at the drop of a ledger. Meanwhile he was a son to be proud of.

"Hey, Em," said Gunny, addressing his wife through the open kitchen door, "how about another cup of coffee?"

For Gunny, this little epilogue to his real breakfast was often the pleasantest period of the day. It belonged in no one's schedule and had been computed in no budget. It was theirs, Gunny and Emmy's, the one moment in the thronging communal life of the dove-gray bungalow when the two of them could be together, just the way they'd planned it long ago.

A piece of ham lay on a clean saucer beside Gunny's coffee cup. This was Emmy's clandestine betrayal of Harry's edict about conserving meat points.

Ordinarily Gunny and his wife did not talk much when they sat over the breakfast table; talking could spoil the sense, important to both, of being together. But today Emmy picked up the paper. She read something which made her give a low quick laugh—the kind of laugh that meant she wanted Gunny to ask her a question.

"What's that, mother?"

"Oh, just a movie," Emmy said.

"What about this picture? You want to go?"

"Why, yes. I'd like it, Earl." She was the only member of the family who called Gunny by his Christian name—but now she used it without assurance. "I really would, sometime."

"What's the matter with today? We used to see pictures in the P. M."

"Yes, of course, Earl," Emmy said in the same half-dreamy and self-doubting way. "We did, but that was different. I—I don't think I could go today."

Regret mixed with hesitation in her voice.

"What's different about it? Why couldn't you go?"

"Why, Earl Watrous," Emmy said, "what would we do with Sonny?"

"Take him along with us," Gunny said. His voice was serious; he put his hand over hers.

"Let's go, Emmy," he said. "What's stopping us?"

Emmy took her hand from under his. Once more it seemed that she wavered between refusal and consent. Then the days she lived, the housewife days flowing and pushing her along in their endless bobbing current, reasserted their pressure.

She rose decisively.

"I can't go, Earl. I laundered yesterday, and I have all that ironing to do."

Gunny looked at his wife; he moistened his lips but didn't speak. The laundry, he knew, was three quarters Harry's; Dot always took care of the baby's.

"Maybe we can go some other time," Emmy said. "Some evening . . ."

Gunny looked at the plate where the ham had been. In the evening would be fine, but in the evening Emmy couldn't go because she had to get up in the morning.

"All right, Em," Gunny said. He stood up, and feeling in his pocket for his pipe he walked rather heavily out of the dining room.

Gunny, pipe in mouth, walked downtown. His step, though firm and soldierly, was not the standard thirty-six-inch stride; Gunny had shortened it in order to accommodate his grandson. Sonny was not a fast walker, depending on determination rather than speed. He refused all aid; he took Gunny's hand only at intersections; pumping his legs hard, he kept his eyes fixed on the lines in the pavement.

"Watch it," Gunny cautioned as a large black dog, ferocious and affectionate, barred his companion's path.

Sonny tottered momentarily, but rapidly recovered poise and came back fighting. Pushing his fist into the dog's face, he steadied himself, at the same time discouraging further interest; eyes fixed vigilantly on the pavement lines, he pressed on toward a destination which seemed clearly known to him, to him and no one else except his comrade, Gunny. For some weeks now, ever since this walk had become routine, the Watrouses had speculated about it. Where did they go and what did they do? The Watrouses wanted to know, but Gunny, questioned, was evasive.

"We got a spot we like," was all he would say.

Today they followed their accustomed route to a place where a post office and a few stores made a small business oasis. Here, next to a vacant lot, was an establishment which had long been regarded as an eyesore:

HOOVER SNOOKER PARLOR

You would not have expected to find a client in the Hoover Snooker Parlor at that hour in the morning, yet Cliff was there, knocking the balls around on one of the pool tables. From his greeting to the new arrivals, it was clear that he had been expecting them.

"Hi, sarge. . . . Hi, Sonny."

"Hi, Cliff," Gunny said. He addressed himself sternly to his comrade: "What's got into you, my boy? Can't you answer when somebody tells you hello?"

"Hi," Sonny answered obediently. He climbed into one of the high spectator chairs against the wall. From behind the cigar counter a pasty freckled youth came over, carrying a board which he set into slots whittled in the arms of the chair; he reached into his pocket and extracted a handful of bottle tops, which he put on the board. Sonny, thus provided with amusement and at the same time secured from mischief, began to play happily.

"Thanks, Posty," Gunny said to the freckled youth. He turned to Cliff. "Well," he began ruminatively, "chalk up, partner. What's it going to be? Myself, I'm kelly-pool-minded on a day like this. Yes, sir, I might just be in the frame of mind to shake you loose from some of your spare change."

At noon they put away their cues and the sergeant picked up Sonny.

"See you tomorrow, Cliff?" he asked.

"Sure," Cliff said. "See you tomorrow."

That was the way they spent every day, Cliff thought. See you tomorrow, and then tomorrow it was see you tomorrow, and a game of pool and a bottle of beer.

They were hanging on to something and were both afraid to let go.

Some day he or Gunny would break off the pool, but he didn't want to think about that yet. Seeing Gunny every day, even if both were bored with what they did, kept him going.

CLIFF left the pool hall and walked along Figueroa Street, looking at the skyscrapers. He crossed Third against the light and went into a motion-picture theater. When he got out he walked over to his father's office and waited for him to drive home. There had been times in the past when Cliff had been very close to his father. And even now, riding up Wilshire Boulevard in the car, there was a friendly feeling between them.

Only it was not the same.

Possibly, in getting older, his father resented being tied down. The war, and Cliff's enlistment, had intensified this feeling in Old Man Harper; as a compensation he kept harking back to the last war. Mr. Harper had served overseas, a corporal in a regiment of engineers, but he had never seen action. Once he had joked about this, but he didn't any more.

Mr. Harper never came right out and said he'd been in battles, but he let on that he had. When he so much as talked about war, Cliff wanted to throw up. All the stuff his father told sounded like something he'd seen in a movie and a lousy one at that; if any of it was true, then that other war wasn't a war at all but some kind of musical comedy where the fellows all drank wine and horsed around with French girls.

The bragging was bad enough, but Cliff would rather have gone out on a patrol than stay home and listen to one of the talks which his father now dished out. These were horrible. They ruined everything that had been decent in his relations with his father.

Cliff knew that his mother promoted the talks. His mother had always been his father's conscience. Tonight, when they were finishing supper, his mother gave his father a calm monitory look.

His father cleared his throat unnecessarily and said, "Cliff, I want to have a talk with you."

Mrs. Harper by family tradition was never present at "talks"; her husband reported on them later.

"I have a headache tonight, dear," Mrs. Harper said. "I think I'll go up."

Mr. Harper turned off the radio, shifting somewhat uncomfortably in his big easy chair. He said, "Cliff, get my bourbon out and make me a highball, will you? Make one for yourself, if you want it."

No previous lecture had ever begun this way. In fact, it was the first time Mr. Harper had ever offered his son a drink.

"I don't need one, thanks, dad," Cliff said. He got out the pint bottle and put the liquor in the glass.

As Cliff handed him the highball, Mr. Harper said, "I don't mind your having a snort here in the house once in a while. Told your mother so."

His tone was slightly patronizing, as if Cliff had been petitioning for this indulgence.

"But filling up with beer down at the poolroom," Mr. Harper said, frowning, "that's no good, Cliff."

Mr. Harper took a sip of his drink while his son worked one big-knuckled hand against the other.

"How would you like to go to college?"

This was so unexpected that Cliff didn't answer.

"I was talking to James Tracy yesterday," his father continued, "and he said Jim was entering Cal. and Western. That set me thinking: Is another man's boy going to get a fine education and you miss out, just because you served your country? Not if I can help it, Cliff."

Mr. Harper put down his glass. Rising from his chair, he began to walk up and down the room.

"Not if I can help it, Cliff," he repeated. "And I *can* help it! Cal. and Western wants to help you young veterans finish your education. Now here's the set-up."

Somehow Mr. Harper looked young, eager; he was seeing himself in Cliff's place, dramatizing the lanky youth of 1918, in ridiculous pants and tight-fitting coat, attending Cal. and Western. Cliff listened, noting the points as Mr. Harper ticked them off on his fingers: the university's willingness to waive entrance examination and provide a scholarship and a part-time job.

The proposition sounded pretty good. Cliff knew his father wanted him to be enthusiastic, and he did his best. But all he wanted to do was get started. He would have been glad to drive a truck or mix concrete, any damn thing just so long as he got started. Going to school might be all right.

Maybe that was the way you had to do it, maybe that was the spot to begin.

"THE course will trace the correlation between economy and politics in medieval and modern times. . . . "Next term, when we study the crisis which produced the present war, I hope we can count on a report from a young man among us who himself has just come back from combat."

Professor Baird was looking at Cliff, and the students around him all turned in his direction. Cliff, much surprised, kept his eyes lowered.

"At all events," the professor finished, "former marine Clifford Wain Harper is most welcome."

There was a ripple of decorous clapping. For a second Cliff raised his head, wheeled his eyes around with a wild, shrinking stare.

His great hope about Cal. and Western had been that, once enrolled, he would no longer be a person set apart from others. Still, the campus was a pleasant place to be. And no doubt after a while the girls and fellows would stop looking on him as a curiosity. There was so much going on that surely he would become identified with some of it, be swept along as others were.

When the electric bell in the corridor announced the end of class, Cliff rushed for the door, dodging through the students who streamed from the other classrooms. Racing across the quadrangle, he dashed into the cafeteria. He marked and racked his timecard, hung his coat in his locker, and put on his apron.

Two minutes later, panting slightly, he took his place behind the huge steam table stretching down one side of the room. Cliff began working hard, plunking one or two pork chops, as requested, on each plate.

"Hi, Leatherneck."

Harley Grenacker, a fellow he had played football with in high school, stood in front of the table in the uniform of a Marine private. Harley knew about Cliff's combat record, and his slightly tense smile showed his embarrassment at wearing olive-green while Cliff, a veteran, stood there in a white apron to serve him.

Cliff grinned. He knew why Harley had called him Leatherneck. It was a kind of salute.

"Hi, Harley. How's the old appetite?"

"Rarin' like a litter of panthers."

"Try some pig on it. Gravy, Harley?"

"Thanks, Cliff. Comin' out for practice?"

"Haven't made up my mind yet."

"Better had. We could use a good quarter."

"Well, maybe I will. Got to think it over."

"You better come out. So long, Cliff."

"So long, Harley."

"CLIFF'S in the starting line-up," Gunny said. He folded the paper carefully and put it on the table. "Starting what, Earl?" Emmy asked. Bringing the coffeepot so he could have a third cup if he wanted, she sat down beside him in the nine-o'clock sun.

"Game down at the Stadium."

"That's fine," Emmy said. She poured a little of the coffee into her own cup, then asked with a curious timidity, "Are you going to the game, dear?"

"I can't go today, mother."

There was trouble in Emmy's face, the patient ledger on which life had written so much.

Emmy had worried about Gunny for some time past. He had been unlike himself, irritable to the point of speaking roughly now and then—something that had happened seldom in the course of their life together.

It had been nearly two weeks since they had enjoyed one of their after-breakfast chats; even the delicacies cadged from Harry's ration budget had not tempted Gunny. Today he had eaten hardly any breakfast at all; he had on his herringbone suit—the first time he had worn it since his arrival.

Emmy did not understand. With the same strained and touching timidity as before, she asked, "Is anything the matter, Earl?"

Gunny did not look at her.

"I'm going out to Hilldale today, mother."

Emmy turned over this information without getting any clue from it. Hilldale, a suburb located in the San Fernando Valley, twenty miles or so from town, was a defense-plant center.

"What time will you be back, Earl?"

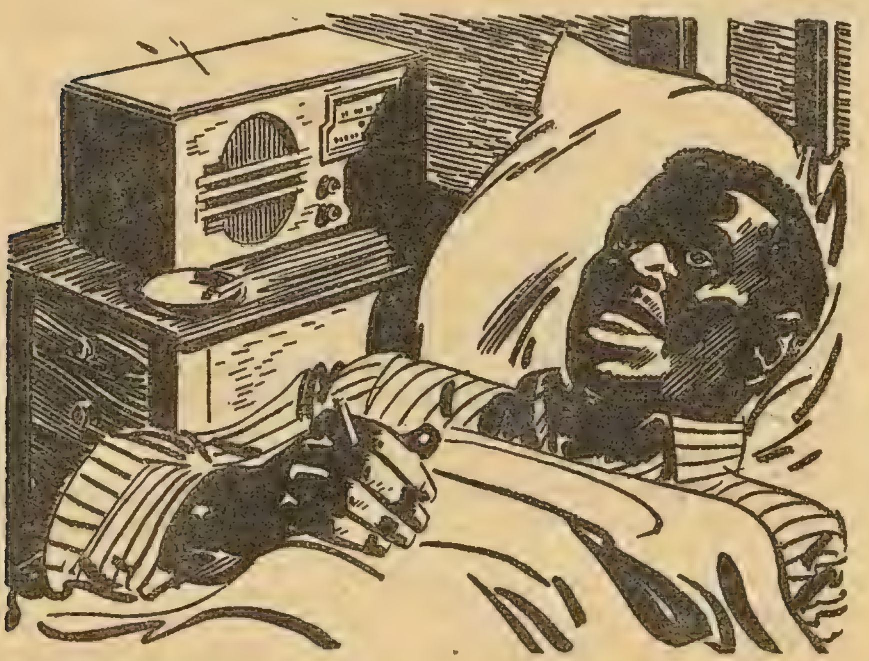
"I've taken a room out there, Emmy."

Emmy's expression showed no change. She peered uncertainly at Gunny in the morning light, waiting for the explanation which must surely qualify this statement.

"I'm going to move out for a while." Gunny picked up a fork. "I got me a job," he said, "out at Horizon Aircraft."

Now it was out; at last he'd said it. He looked heavily at Emmy, seeing pain lumber its slow way into her eyes.

"Horizon—" she said. "Way out there?" She moved her head weakly from side to side. "Going away from your home, Earl," she said with terror. "How can that be?"



Gunny waited. His next words would be the final test, the answer to his challenge, his stand against the strange betrayal of his years with Emmy. Even if he messed up what he had to say, if the test failed, he would still go away as he had said he would.

No other course was open. He could not tell Emmy that since coming home he had sustained a wound more severe than any he had suffered in his campaigns—the feeling, ruinous to male pride, of being supplanted. In his absence his son Harry had become the head of the house, and he, Gunny, a tolerated permanent intruder.

He must go.

Here at home, destruction waited. To him, a man still knit together strongly, uselessness was ruin; he would be a nothing, an old someone puttering around a bungalow yard, going to the grocery, minding a baby. . . . A baby! Here lurked, possibly, the final ambush, closing tighter each day because of his possessing, ever-growing love for his grandson, Sonny.

So now the test. He put his arm around the back of Emmy's chair, sitting as they had sat so often when there was a problem to be settled.

"Think you can come with me, Em?"

Once more Emmy's head moved in that aimless way from side to side. She had the air of a trapped creature —and Gunny was part of the trap.

She said gently and yet warily, "I don't know, Earl. . . . I don't know just what you mean. Out to Hilldale," she said vaguely, trying to gain time. "How could I live out there?"

"We could live together," he said. "Like we used to. You could keep house there instead of here. It would be sort of a change, for both of us."

Once, perhaps even a few years ago, Emmy could have met the test as she had met others in her life with Gunny. This one she could not meet. Something had gone out of her that would have given her the power. Until this moment she had not known that it was gone.

In a slow and halting voice, abandoning her rights, yielding to the sickness which had turned her toward her son and away from her husband, Emmy made the rejection. "I would go, Earl. I would. Only, they need me here. . . . You can make out, but I have to be here or they couldn't get along. Couldn't you do some other way?" she said groping sickly for a compromise. "Couldn't you ride out there on the bus?"

Gunny did not move for several seconds. Then, at last, he took his arm away from his wife's chair. He pushed back his own chair, rising to his feet.

"No, Em," he said. Mechanically he took out his pipe, fingered it, then put it back in his pocket.

"Well," he said, "got to be going. . . ."

Emmy took a quick step after him, and Gunny paused.

"Earl, you won't be gone long? You'll be home weekends, won't you, and some evenings? Won't you?"

"Sure, mother, sure," Gunny said. He put his arms around her, feeling the small dry sobs knotting in her chest.

"Take it easy, Em," he said. "Nothing to cry over; just a job to keep me busy for a while."

"I know, Earl, I know," Emmy said, clutching him, her lips against his chin. "Only it's so different. I don't know. You going away like this."

"I'll get home as often as I can," he said. "I'll be home quite a bit. So just take it easy. Nothing to cry over, mother. Nothing in the world."

ON the day he left home, former gunnery sergeant Earl T. Watrous' deposit with the Bank of America was less by a hundred dollars than it had been a short time previously. The accounts of Matt Klein and Cliff Harper also showed hundred-dollar deductions: the withdrawals had been presented in a brown manila envelope to Mrs. Kincheloe. Before the end of the week on which the presentation had been made, Mrs. Kincheloe paid a year's rent on a two-room bungalow on Mount Auburn Street in Los Angeles. Here she brought her son Perry home to live with her.

Getting the money had been the easiest part. It had been the first practical demonstration of what the guys could do by working as a unit. On the day Perry left the hospital, Matt Klein brought his car from Klein's Super Market; and Gunny carried Perry out of Matt's car and put him in the bed. Later on, Cliff had come over, and Mrs. Kincheloe, a welcoming song for her son swelling in her vast black body, had cooked them all a roast pork dinner.

Perry's eyes were not those of a man who had met with defeat. They had the shadows of atrocious pain in them and were no longer like a young man's eyes, but they were living, bold, and soft, still vital with the comradeship and confidence which of old had made him an exceptional man. Of Perry's great strength, only one arm was left, a giant's arm, developed even past its former huge proportions by his daily task of pulling himself on the bar of his bed. Smooth-skinned, intricately corded, the arm might have been designed by Michelangelo; it served Perry's needs with an impersonal power which seemed self-generated rather than the product of the reduced body to which it was attached.

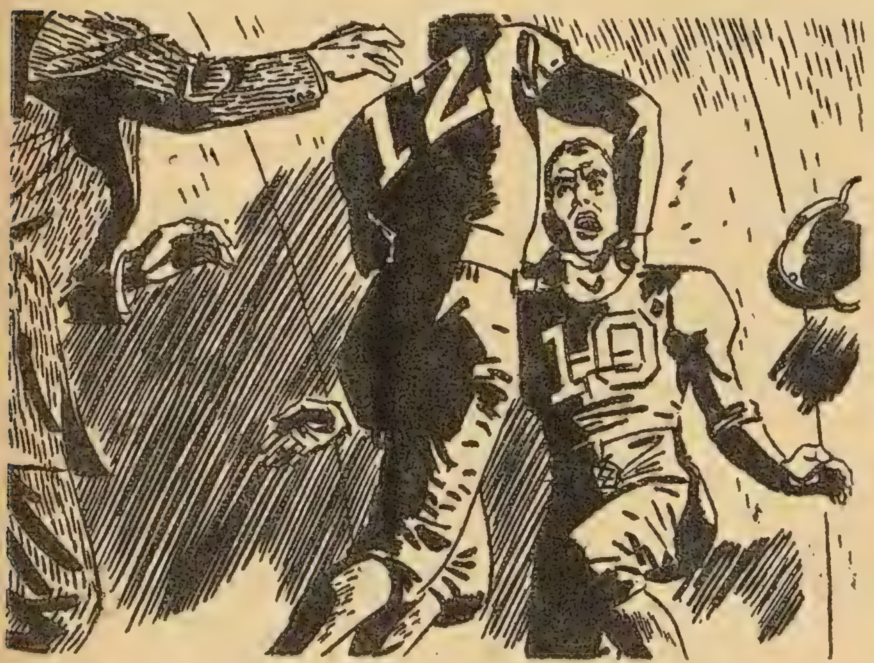
Perry had lost the other arm and both legs. But old Five-by-Five was going to be all right. So long as his mother was there, his life would prosper.

This evening of the home-coming banquet in Perry's honor was both joyful and sad for Cliff. In one sense he was happier than he had been for weeks, secure in the solidarity of comradeship with his three friends. On the other hand, Gunny had told him that morning of his plan to move to Hilldale. Cliff felt that the four of them would never be together again. In the service their actions had been interrelated, and until now this feeling of group identity, though thinned, had somehow persisted. Yet the feeling had been oriented around Gunny. With the sarge somewhere else the unity was broken.

One strand, however, was laid down that evening which through the autumn months bound Cliff closely to Perry.

Cliff had brought a present to the home-coming—a small radio by means of which his friend could listen to the football games; when the two were together in the bungalow on Mount Auburn Street, they would discuss what had happened in the Stadium the previous afternoon.

That September and October, playing the early games in the warm polleny sunshine, Cliff would sometimes grin after a good play, thinking, Old Five-by-Five will like that one. Football seemed to have more connection with real things when he remembered Perry lying there and listening to it. Also, this thought helped when, at times, in spite of all that he could do, the combat feeling took possession of his nerves while he was in a game.



ANGULAR clouds shouldered each other ponderously in the sky which cupped the oval of the Stadium. Cliff sat on the bench, a blanket over his head. Next to him, the student manager, hunched in a raincoat, chattered incessantly. Between the first and second quarters he took a folded newspaper out of his pocket and showed Cliff a story he had planted, naming "Harper, the Marine Vet," as a mainstay of the Cal. and Western backfield.

Cliff didn't care about press stories. They merely served to separate him further from his classmates. What he wanted to do now was play ball. At that moment Mike Petrillo motioned half a dozen substitutes into the game.

"Halsey, Dubowsky, Kodiac, Harper . . ."

Cliff went in and made interference on a double crossbuck. On the next play he dropped back a step and flipped a short pass, flat as a rifle's trajectory, against Nirdlinger's ribs. The ball was well out of his hands when he was knocked down by two S. C. players, one falling on top of him.

A few minutes later, with the ball deep in S. C. territory, Nirdlinger gave the signal for an end-around, with Cliff taking the ball. He was tackled without gain, and on the play three players piled up on him after he was down. This time S. C. was penalized five yards for unnecessary roughness.

Cliff hardly heard the signals as the quarter called them in the huddle; he was thinking of what one of the S. C. men who had piled on him had said as the referee burrowed for the ball.

"How you doing, Big Shot?"

He got it now: this was what all his publicity had done for him. Evidently the S. C. players had picked him as a dangerous threat, a man to be ganged up on, shocked into helplessness, even if it cost a penalty. Fury choked him; all the confusion engendered in him by the failure he had made of college life bunched into hate.

Cliff went in on each play, and each time he was deliberately smeared; not only the big blond tackle who had jumped on him when he was down, but every one of the S. C. players was laying for him now. When he got out of the second pile-up he was bleeding at the nose and there was a cleat cut on his cheekbone.

On the side lines the S. C. coach, puzzled and irritated, sent in a substitute, yanking the big tackle, who immediately trotted toward the side lines. At his coach's signal he moved off toward the dressing-room tunnel.

Head Coach Petrillo saw Cliff following the blond man off the field. There was something odd about the way Cliff looked— Then Mike Petrillo knew what it was. In his brain was a memory picture of men stalking forward, bent at the shoulders just a little, as Cliff had bent just now, their faces turned into the face of combat.

Before Petrillo was in the tunnel he could hear from its stone mouth the unthinkable animal-like snarl and the thick bruisy blows of something made of flesh, yet hollow, being pounded on concrete flooring. Mike Petrillo's fist then caught Cliff on the point of the jaw, and as Cliff spun around, the coach hit him again, then caught his sagging body and pulled him through the steel door of the Cal. and Western dressing room.

The crowd and players had been gone for an hour when Mike and Cliff came out of the dressing-room tunnel.

Mike said, "We can phone your folks and tell them that you're eating with me."

Cliff nodded, hardly hearing.

"Was the guy hurt?" he asked several times. "Did I hurt him bad?"

Mike's answer was always the same, "He'll be all right. Don't worry about that now."

But Cliff paid no attention. "I didn't mean to do it," he said. "Honest to God, Mike, I didn't mean to."

With his hands knotted around his thumbs and his face contorted with the pressure of his feelings, Cliff told Mike of the fear which haunted him by day and night: that he belonged Out There, and only there, that he should never have come back home. . . . He sat blinking at Mike, begging for an answer which he felt did not exist, a reassurance which he would reject.

But Mike offered no glib comforts.

"What do you want to do, kid?"

Cliff thought a minute. "I don't know, except get out of school."

"Got any place you want to go?"

"No." Cliff thought again. "There is a place I *could* go, though. Where I could get a job, maybe."

"You better go there, Cliff. There's no way you can come out of combat and be happy in a Buster Brown collar, writing on a slate and playing hopscotch at recess. I should have talked to you a hell of a long time ago. I might have saved you all the grief you've been through. Sure you tried to mash a fellow's head against a concrete floor. That may not be pretty, but the reasons for it aren't pretty either." Mike stood up. "Let's go over to the house and see your dad."

LATER, in the room he had occupied since boyhood and which he was now leaving for good, Cliff emptied dresser drawers on the bed, then made selections from the bed and stuffed them in a suitcase.

From downstairs he heard his father call for his mother, and then the door of the parlor was closed. Suddenly the door opened; Cliff heard a sound like a muffled sob, then feet on the stairs and the slam of another door as his mother went into her bedroom. He could tell from the way she was crying that she wanted him to come to the door, frightened, and ask if he could come in, as he had when he was little and his mother had made scenes like this, made them for one reason or another, but always a reason connected with him, with her possessing him. Cliff went on packing his suitcase, and when he had it full, he went downstairs.

Mike and his father were standing in the hall. From Mike's calm face and his father's flustered one, Cliff knew that Mike had won.

"I understand you intend leaving the university and looking for a job," his father said. "Don't you think a decision like that calls for more thinking over?"

"I've thought it over, sir," Cliff said.

"I don't know, Cliff, I don't know," his father said. "When I got out of the Army—"

Cliff took a deep breath. "You were never in the Army, dad—not the way I was."

Mr. Harper's jaw sagged slightly. I shouldn't have said it, Cliff thought, knowing that nothing else that ever could be said would make it right between him and his father.

"You may need some money," Mr. Harper said, "to get you by until this job materializes."

He was taking out his pocketbook, his last instrument of power. Cliff stood still, looking at the pocketbook, and his father put it back.

"So long, dad."

"Good-by, Clifford," Mr. Harper said. He added in a flinching tone, another tone entirely, "Remember, son, no matter what happens, you've always got this house to come back to. You've always got your home."

"Thanks, dad," Cliff said.

GUNNY had rented a room on Nestor Street, Hilldale—about two miles from the south portals of Horizon. The room was not much bigger than his hallway cubicle at home, but he was sole possessor of it, with kitchen privileges—a free agent, dependent on no man or woman.

Yes, sir, Gunny was free. It was fine to be free.

Naturally, it took some getting used to. Up to this moment Gunny had not appreciated the values of freedom. Instead, he had lived always in the closest, most intimate relationships with other people, conditioning every act, every decision to some demand made upon him.

In the old days there had been his acceptance of authority for the men under him. Always he had looked after everyone who turned to him for leadership—his own family first, and then the beardless babies whom he had taught to shoot guns and whom he had finally led into the hell of combat on a rainy jungle island.

It was only the senseless gnawing of the preposterous habit of taking care of others which kept him from fully relishing his freedom. A few week-ends he went home, saw Emmy and Sonny and the other folks, but that didn't do him any good; it only increased the loneliness.

So Gunny was quite absurdly pleased when, one morning about one o'clock, just after he got home from work, his landlord told him that there was a guy out the front door, asking for him.

That night Gunny could hardly shut his eyes because of pleasure, waking with the first light to make sure Cliff was still there. He got up an hour earlier than usual so as to have the kitchen to himself; he let Cliff sleep till the coffee, scrambled eggs, and griddle cakes were ready.

It was a gala breakfast. In its course Gunny got the story of how Cliff had left Cal. and Western. Gunny drank coffee and puffed his pipe; now and then he asked a question, watching Cliff's face for the answers as much as he listened to his words.

"So this punk tried to get tough, huh?"

"I tried to kill him." Guilt rode Cliff's back like a witch's cat. "If I'd done it, I couldn't have gone on living. I'd have wanted to be put away."

"He pulled a fast one on you. So you got sore. So you wanted to kill him. Only, you didn't. You had mercy on this wisenheimer, and what little you did to him he had coming for roughing you."

Gunny struck a match on his pants' leg. "Your killing days are over, Cliff. Take my word for it."

"I hope to God you're right," Cliff said, speaking as if to himself. "I sure hope so."

"I'm right," Gunny said, "so forget it." He began to stack the empty dishes. "What about this job you talked about last night?" he asked. "We got jobs at Horizon to suit all tastes. A while back they hired a man for twenty thousand bucks a year—and he'd never seen the inside of an aircraft plant! Captain Archer Winston. Now, if you play your cards right, maybe you can knock over a spot like that."

"You mean Arch Winston, the ace?"

"Uh-huh. You read about his getting the Congressional Medal?"

"I read about it," Cliff said. "And I knew him. I used to go to school with his kid brother."

Gunny knocked out his pipe. "Cliff," he said seriously, "this Winston is a big shot out at the plant. If he'll talk to you, and he likes you, you won't be swamping in no storeroom—no, sir, nor standing up all day on the production line. You'll have a nice upholstered chair under you, baby."

Driving over from their boardinghouse in the pick-up bus, the friends carefully rehearsed the procedure to be followed. You had to think up a reason that made sense to the secretary who would ask you what you wanted.

Well, it was a personal matter. Yes, he was a personal friend of Captain Winston. Yes, it was important. And when, after his name had been phoned to Arch's secretary, and the fantastic answer had come back that Arch knew him, yes, would talk to him, Cliff was required to sign a registry, a pledge to abide by the plant rules, and an affidavit that he was a U. S. citizen. Finally a guide conducted him upstairs; somehow he found himself sitting in a big upholstered chair, looking at a pack of playing cards which occupied the middle of Arch Winston's desk.

No pen, no blotter, inkwell, ash tray, or typewriter. Just a pack of cards, well thumbed, and a sheet of paper with some kind of score scribbled on it.

There was something weird about the pack of cards, something Cliff didn't get.

Arch was the same. A handsome fellow with a keen face, wearing a pin-stripe suit which somehow emphasized his trimness and his look of vigilance and dissipation. How old was Arch? About twenty-seven, tops. The gray at the sides of his hair gave him a look of dignity.

All this time Arch was chatting with him in really friendly style, asking him about his family, telling him about Pinky. Cliff kept glancing at the cards, trying not to, but feeling his eyes shift over by themselves, as if Arch had had egg on his vest.

Finally Arch caught him and said in a new voice, with a rapid smile that Cliff did not remember:

"Want to play some gin rummy?"

He picked up the pack and shuffled it.

"How about it, Cliff? Got some time you can kill?"

Cliff was embarrassed. The request, so casually made, was as odd as the hard jerky twist of Arch's voice. It was as if, by inviting him to play, Arch had been making fun of Cliff—or of himself.

"What's the matter, fellow?" Arch demanded. "Wouldn't a little game appeal to you? It passes the time, believe me. Nothing kills time better than a friendly little game. Wait a minute—I've got something to attend to, then we'll play."

Arch flipped a dictograph key. He spoke to his secretary in the other room.

"Senator Mahlon has not arrived," said a girl's voice.

"O. K.," Arch said, and closed the key. "I'm a hell of an important man, Cliff," he said. "You perceive that, I suppose."

Cliff did not know whether Arch was kidding or not.

"I'm sure sorry, Arch," he said, to change the subject, "but I can't play gin."

HE was just about to say he would play poker or red dog, but Arch interrupted him, shuffling the deck with a sound like tearing silk.

"Never mind. We'll discuss topics of mutual interest. Pardon me for suggesting cards," Arch said. "I spend a proportion of my time alone, and I play cards. This"—Arch held up the score pad—"indicates the progress made today. Twelve games for my right hand, fifteen for my left."

Arch leaned back in his swivel chair and looked out of the windows at the vast stretch of the Horizon plant, twinkling with lights and humming with activity in the smoke-colored air.

"Have you got any idea what I do around here, Cliff? I'll tell you," he said, before Cliff could answer. "It's quite interesting. I shake hands."

"Huh?"

"I shake hands, Clifford. I am a greeter. The president of this concern is a young struggling millionaire named Walt Humphries, employer of ninety thousand people. Has he time to shake hands? Has he time to show visitors around the plant? He has not. That is my job, Clifford. I am fairly well known as an aviator, if I may say so. When a stuffed shirt is hand-shaken or shown around the plant by me, he is not resentful. He is flattered. He has been officially greeted by Horizon's expert greeter, Captain Archie Winston, former combat ace. The rest of the time I play cards, my right hand against my left."

Cliff stared at him. "That's sure tough, Arch," he said. A network of small lines stood out in Arch's face.

"What's tough about it?"

"You made it sound that way."

"You want to know what's tough? Flying fifty-one combat missions is what's tough. Let me tell you. A plane is like a crate—we call 'em crates, and that's what they are. You and your crew are all jammed in together there. You're the pilot. Let's say four or five of these guys get shot up; these fellows tell you about it on the intercom. Or they don't tell you about it. They say they're fine, they're swell, when you check them, but from the way they say it you know different. Once in a while they scream, but if they do they generally apologize—they're nice guys. You dish out a pep talk—and fly them back to base. You've always got to get them back."

"I see that part of it," Cliff said.

"Well, that's the part that's tough. So you get them back. And then the ground crew opens up the crate and finds it full of busted guts. Always the other guys. Never *you*. *You're* lucky. If your wings get shot off, you let down the wheels and taxi on the flak. You're that kind of a pilot. Naturally they give you medals every so often for being lucky. When you have medals enough so you rate a job like this, is *that* tough?"

"I guess not, Arch."

"You know it isn't. I'll take this, my friend. Even if they quit handing me the fancy salary checks, I'll take it. Just so long as they don't take away my cards."

The dictograph buzzed and Arch pressed the key. The girl's voice said, "Excuse me, captain, but the senator is coming in."

"I'll be right over."

Arch closed the key. "Stick around, Clifford," he said, rising. "I'll be back in a little while and we can play some acey-deucy. If you get bored waiting, there's a bottle of liquor in the bottom drawer."

Cliff sat motionless, a sense of failure clogging his thoughts. He had messed up everything as usual: he hadn't asked for a job; for some reason which he couldn't define he would never ask Arch now. No sense sticking around; he had flopped again. The best thing to do was get out and go to the application office.

Arch's secretary looked up as he came out of the office.

"Captain Winston thought you would wait."

"Tell him I—had to see a fellow. Tell him thanks."

CLIFF had been fingerprinted and photographed and had submitted his discharge for numerous inspections at Horizon. At least he was safe in one respect: the discharge didn't mention any reason for the termination of his service except "disability due to wounds received in action."

Several times the shaking came back on him. Once a group of fighter planes banked into the airport, flying so low their motors shook the ground; another time a truck driver dumped a load of scrap a few feet away from him while he was sorting salvage.

Being in Salvage wasn't bad. It was the lowest-paid work in the plant, it was dirty, and it required little brains—but Cliff had no particular objection to any of these conditions; they were unimportant when compared to the fact that he was part of something, no longer an outsider.

Let the girls in Metal Process call the Salvage hands "glorified junkmen" and "garbageers." Who cared? He was doing all right. The men of Salvage were, after their fashion, veterans of an older war. For wherever junk collects, there gather the armies of wabbly-boned and filthy-handed men cast out by cities, charity hospitals, hard-working wives.

Men employed in Salvage were for the most part Negroes, kids, and old guys taken from relief rolls. Many of them, in depression times, had been hobos; they had roamed the highways or holed up in the rabbity tramp towns which were to be found on the outskirts of all big cities.

An evidence of Hobo Culture was the names of the guys. From times beyond recall, perhaps when most bindle-stiffs were gypsies or whisky-drinking pot-menders, the nomenclature of the damned has been colorful. With a gaudy name a man has something to live by, a coin to keep even when he has been cheated out of everything else. At Horizon a man's name was inscribed on his badge, but if a Salvage worker had a legal surname, no one ever found it out. The names on the badges were Papago Kid, Popeye, The Gimp, Moon Mullins, Tucson, and Dynamite.

The Personnel Department winked at this tradition of the Salvage guys' badges. Thus Horizon's sociology experts set out to humor Salvage—a notoriously troublesome element—with this easy flattery of painted tin.

Cliff, who had gone to work with a badge reading "Harper," got a new one that said "Slim." He acquired this name one afternoon when, his crew having turned out one man short, the straw boss, addressing him, said, "You, there, Slim. You know how to drive a jeep?"

Cliff let on that he did.

"Then climb on that there Goose and run it. Works just like a Four-by-Four, only for the hoist."

The Goose was the most spectacular machine used in Salvage. Painted red, with big hind wheels, small front wheels, and a low body which contained a powerful gasoline motor, it was used to maneuver loads too heavy to be lifted by hand power.

Before the shift was over, Cliff was on his way to being an expert Goose operator. As long as he remained in Salvage he did no other kind of work.

"Where's that Goose?" a lead man would yell.

"Hey, Slim, can you cut it?"

Then Cliff would look at the foreman for a nod and, if he got it, streak over to do the job. He would grow very serious, perched on the high seat of his machine, figuring how to handle each new problem.

"You fellows get a crowbar under it."

The day he acquired the name of Slim and was assigned to the Goose was the finest day Cliff had lived since his fourteenth birthday, when his uncle gave him the drawing set.

A job he liked was a beginning, and a new name was also a beginning. It was swell, but he still had one great worry. The hard work often made him tired, and when he was tired he got the shakes. Back of all his good luck was the nightmare and worry that the plant would decide he was unfit for his responsibility and make him change his job.

Maybe he was never going to get well. Maybe he'd end up like the spindly hobos in Salvage—just a relic that a war had left behind.

GUNNY, of course, didn't have the shakes. He had come out of the service healthy. Gunny was a lucky man, and it was all right for him, from a health point of view, to get himself transferred from Bomber Assembly to Processing. In Assembly, it was drive, drive, drive—keep the stuff moving—and that pace was hard for an old guy even if he was tough.

Not for the world would Gunny have confessed he couldn't stand the pace. Gunny told Cliff he was changing jobs because the tube assembly was too easy. Women could handle it. Gunny wanted to do more for the war effort. He wanted a *man's* job.

But although Gunny got the job he had requested, there was something wrong about it. Gunny was crabby, just as he had been before he left home.

Maybe the new job wasn't any better than the old, even though Gunny was now knocking down a dollar two bits an hour. Gunny had been assigned to a punch press. It was just a little hundred-and-fifty-pounder, and it was completely safe. Any kind of punch press can cut off a man's hands as easily as a chef can slice a hunk of oleomargarine, and hands cost money. With this thought in mind, some designer had perfected a method of keeping the one-man press from causing loss. Gunny wore a harness called a punch-press safety harness—an arrangement of straps fitting over his back, elbows, and shoulders. This contraption was connected with the press in such a way that, when the ram came down, the operator's hands were automatically pulled back out of harm's way.

It was a very simple job, really, well paid, and very, very safe. Yet Gunny didn't like the harness. He would have left it off had it been possible to do so and still operate the press. Having led men into battle, a task requiring initiative, he resented being hitched to a motor brain.

NEAR Horizon was Swing Shift Row. Cliff spent quite a lot of time there. You could make friends easily in the Row. All sorts of people came in. One night there, Cliff ran into someone he had not expected to see. Someone who, as far as he was concerned, was dead and buried.

He was in Happy Landings, sitting at a table with Gunny, when Pat Tracy walked in—or rather, the girl who had been Pat Tracy and was now Mrs. Klim. There were three people with her, a girl and two flying cadets.

Pat looked fine. She had on a small hat with a feather and a silky dark suit with a short skirt. As soon as the waiter gave her crowd a table she put down her handbag to reserve the place and went right out to dance with one of the cadets.

The other cadet and the other girl weren't dancing but were sitting at the table talking, their heads close together.

Thinking about it afterward, Cliff could not tell what made him go to the table. In a way, it was a hell of a thing to do. You couldn't jam your way into a foursome date in Happy Landings without starting something.

By this time Pat had seen Cliff. She left her partner at once and went up to him and shook hands. Pleasure spilled into her eyes and voice as she looked at him, saying the hellos. Back of her, taking somewhat less joy in the meeting, was the cadet who had brought her. Pat finally remembered him and turned around.

"I want you to meet an old friend of mine—"

She never got the name out because the cadet interrupted. "I can do without that," he said.

"Dick! Please!" Pat said anxiously. She gave a worried glance at Cliff.

"O. K., buddy," the cadet said to Cliff. "It's been nice to meet you."

"Dick," Pat said, "this man is a friend of mine."

"All I know is I don't like civilians horning in on my dates."

Rage exploded at the base of Cliff's skull. He stood up, having decided to kill the cadet. The guy stood up, waiting, and Pat seized his arm, trying to drag him away from the table. The cadet shook her off.

Cliff came around the table fast, pulling back his right to loop it at the cadet. The punch never landed; the other student had tripped him. He wound up against a wall and scrambled to his feet, rushing at the cadet with his head lowered, trying to tackle him, but the cadet raised his knee, smearing Cliff's face and knocking him down again.

Cliff rose awkwardly, rubbing his hands over his eyes to clear them. He came in crouching. The cadet struck out his left like a man who knew some boxing. Cliff, however, wasn't in a boxing mood: he pulled back and slammed his foot into the cadet's groin. As the cadet's head jerked forward Cliff caught him on the chin with the heel of his hand—a tactic he had learned in Raider Training. Then Gunny pulled him toward the door. They piled into the car, turning into San Fernando Boulevard just as the squad car came round the corner with four cops in it and the siren wide open.

"LADY wants to see you—"

The cop at the gate had called Cliff over as he came off shift; he jerked his thumb at a small coupé parked across the street.

"Thanks."

He'd started toward the car, walking slowly because his legs seemed a long way from his head. He knew who was in the car even before he saw her. Without saying anything, Cliff went to the right side and got in.

"Cliff, I had to come."

Cliff looked at the wings pinned over her left pocket.

"Tell your husband it was my fault," Cliff said. "I'm sorry I horned in on his party."

"I guess you've got things mixed up, Cliff," she said. "Dick isn't my husband."

Cliff stared. "Pardon me," he said. "I didn't know."

"My husband was wounded in a bombing mission in Italy," Pat said. "He died. I suppose I shouldn't go out, but I get the mimies sitting home."

"I'm sorry, Pat."

"I guess you're working awfully hard," she said.

"I am, sort of—"

"Because if you got an evening off, there's so much—well, I wanted to explain about some things."

"I'll call you sometime."

"I don't believe you will. But Arch Winston knows my number."

"I'll get it from him."

But he didn't. He wasn't going to call Pat.

They had missed the boat, that was all. A smooth wonderful tune had started playing for them and somebody had busted in with a station announcement and the tune had gone off the air. So forget it. The tune hadn't included Swing Shift Row. It had been about something else—love, for instance. Not about two guys fighting in a café and the cops coming.

AND then on Christmas Eve he got a note from Mary Ellen Winston asking him to come out to a party the next night. "Just an old-fashioned family dinner. Arch and I would be so pleased if you could come. And if there's anyone you'd care to bring with you, just let us know."

It didn't take a genius to figure out that was Pat's doing. He intended phoning Mrs. Winston to tell her he couldn't come, but an idea came to him. Gunny, he knew, had drifted away from his own family. The old sarge expected to spend Christmas alone in his room. It would have been lousy to let him do that.

So at the last minute Cliff called Arch's wife and asked if he could come and bring the well-known former gunnery sergeant, Earl T. Watrous.

Watching Arch Winston at the party, Cliff would never have known him for the bored and restless man whom he had seen in his office, locked up with a pack of cards. There was great power for leadership in him, at present employed in making his guests enjoy themselves. He was so anxious for everyone to sing carols that it became absolutely the right thing to do. When they were all warmed up and the punch was circulating, Mary Ellen fussed with chords a little and finally began to play.

As Pat sang she put her arm through Cliff's. He was making noises in his throat intended to be musical. She pressed slightly against him, singing with her eyes half closed. It seemed as if a panel of time had slid back on roller bearings, taking them with it into the recollection of vanished Christmases.

Often the Tracys and the Harpers had spent their holidays together and Old Man Tracy had brought down from the attic a music box which had played the Christmas songs they were now singing.

When the singing was over, Arch got out a bottle. The serious phase of the festivities was now beginning.

"I got this for you, sergeant. Been saving it all year. You and me are gonna have a special drink."

"Man, oh, man," Gunny said, "you forget I've got to go to work tonight."

"Just a short horn before you go?"

"If it's a real short one, captain," Gunny said.

IN the locker, Gunny put on his coveralls. Already he was hating the machine. And as he strapped himself into his harness he felt that tonight would be a showdown. He laid a metal section on the plate and pressed the starting button. The ram slid down and the harness pulled Gunny's arms out of harm's way.

He worked mechanically, easily. He didn't have to think. The machine was his brain. Yet tonight he did not give in to it. He kept on hating. Liquor had given him confidence, had crystallized an idea.

Forward and back. Up and down. Tonight the punch press seemed to be working like a locomotive piston, going faster and faster till you couldn't stand it. Gunny's eyes rolled.

NOW.

Gunny tensed his muscles; with a lunge which swung him off the floor, he threw his weight against the harness, trying to break it. A scream tore out of his throat, he hung on, fighting the Machine Brain with all his strength. His punch press stopped, the ram halfway down; the straw boss ran toward Gunny, many workers leaving their presses to crowd around. Faces haggard in the neon light were bunched like grapes, mouths sagging open.

The straw boss was cutting Gunny out of the harness, unhurt but hysterical with rage.

Three plant cops pushed through the group around Gunny's punch press.

"Take him over to the chief's office."

Workers still at their stations stared as Gunny was led away.

"What was it? A fight?"

The girl who ran the next hydro had an angle. "It was a fight, and how! The guy was fighting the machine."

The personnel director said it was a break for Gunny that he had a decent record. Otherwise he'd have been fired; as it was, he would be put in Salvage, given an old guy's job.

In a way, Cliff was glad it had happened. At least now he saw something of the sarge. They got up at the same time, got off work together; they could chew the fat even on the nights when Cliff was riding out to Beverly to see his girl.

Pat and Cliff, as the weather grew warmer, found pleasant things to do. There was time now for pleasures recently almost forgotten: movies, dancing, love-making . . . just talking. The dialogue was back, their special dialogue which had started so long ago, once more exerting its gentle pull, swirling their lives together.

Having a girl made a tremendous difference. He had never quite realized how much difference it could make, yet it took something away, too. Centering his life on Pat had altered his status as a member of the Group.

Once, the Group had come first. Now it didn't. Spending so much time with Pat, Cliff saw the fellows very little.

And then one hot June night, solemn and windless, Cliff and Pat drove down to the beach in Pat's car and took a swim just as the sun was going down. Afterward they built a driftwood fire, and they got a blanket from the car and spread it down, and they lay close together, breathing the lovely rank cold smell which rose out of the sea.

This was the time. Cliff said, "What about us getting married?" and then took a long breath and lay still.

Pat did not say anything. She didn't move or even seem to breathe. This could mean either one thing or another, and Cliff thought it meant the first thing. Then the pause lasted just too long: he felt Pat's tension under his arm, and with a stupid emptiness he knew it was the second thing.

Pat sat up. She stared at the fire and then at the ocean and she shivered. She started to get up, but Cliff took her by the arm and kept her where she was.

"Go ahead," he said. "What's the matter?"

Pat began to cry.

"I love you more than anything in the world, but I can't marry you, darling. I just can't, that's all. It wouldn't be any good."

"I suppose you've got reasons," Cliff said.

"I haven't got reasons. Only *one* reason."

"I've got a reason, too," Cliff said.

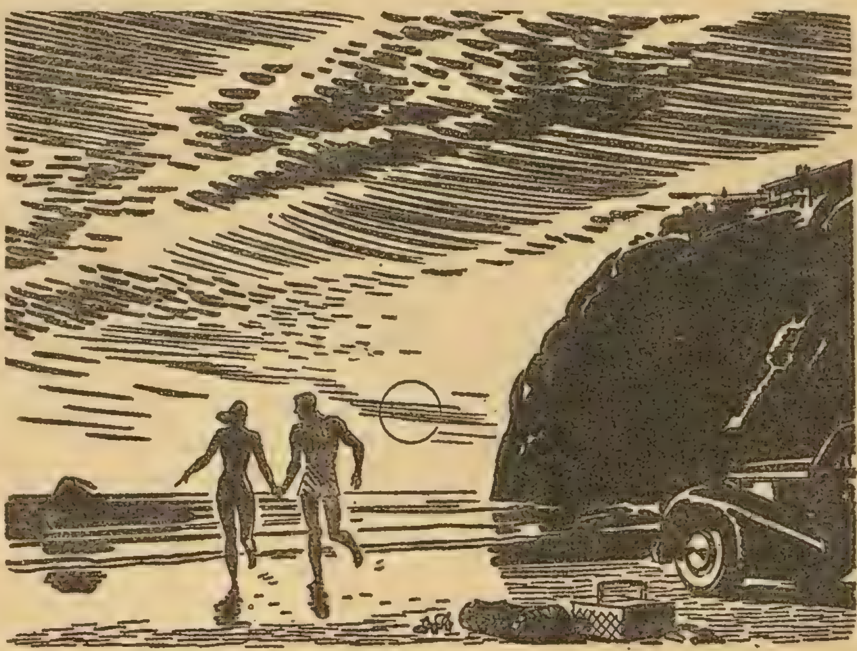
"Yours is better," Pat said. "Only it's no good for you and me."

"How do you know?"

"Because I know what it is. You want to be sure of things."

"Don't you?"

"I found out you can't. I was always sure of everything, and when we were in love I was sure of that, too. Then you went to the war and I wasn't sure of anything. I didn't know I wanted to get married, but I did. I didn't even want to go out, but I went out."



"I never asked you anything about that, Pat," Cliff said.

"I know you didn't, sweetheart, and I've always loved you for it. For that more than anything. I thought you didn't want me to talk about it, so I shut up."

"You were right."

"I know, but I'm going to tell you about it now."

"Go ahead."

"All of a sudden I was in love with him. He was a swell guy. He was older, and I thought that was what I wanted. I was impatient and crazy, and I thought if I didn't get married I never would. The only thing that was bad was how to explain to you. That was terrible. I just didn't know—I put it off, and then—"

"The guy was killed," Cliff said in a slow wondering way, trying to bring this fellow into his mind.

It was hard to think of anybody but himself in relation to Pat.

"You and I weren't ready when you went away. You know that. If they'd only given us more time, just a little more time . . ." Her voice trailed off.

Who was this "they" she was talking about?

"There *never* was enough time. Not for you and me. Or for him, either." Her hand tightened on his wrist.

"I wanted to be a wife so much. I would have been such a fine wife, if there had been enough time."

"But we've got *now*—"

"Yes, we have, and it's wonderful. It's ours forever, only there's a condition. We can have it but we can't ask questions about it. We can't organize it."

"Organize, you mean, like having a family?"

Pat didn't answer, but the answer was "Yes."

"People used to organize it," Cliff said. "What's the matter with us doing it?"

"Because we're not set up for it. Nobody is. The world isn't set up for it any more, or anybody in it."

Pat said this rapidly, in a dry, hot voice, as if reciting from a paper. Like everything else she said, this was clearly nothing she had just made up.

She had thought about it. She had it all laid out in her mind.

"You want love to be a bedroom, a yard, and a kitchen," she said as if speaking to herself. "I just want it to be love. You want it to be a house with a chimney."

"What's the matter with a chimney?"

"Nothing. I like them. Only not for you and me."

Neither spoke for a while. Then he said, "All I did was ask about us getting married. I didn't mean to get into a fight about a damn chimney."

Pat fumbled for her handbag. She took a comb out of it and, in the firelight, combed the beach sand out of her hair. She said, "If you can't understand about that, you can't understand about anything."

"I'll be damned if I can."

"I don't think there's any use our talking, then," Pat said ruefully but definitely.

"Why don't we go, then?"

Pat felt sick at her stomach and her knees were weak. However, she folded up the blanket and picked up the paper carry-all with the supper things. Her voice was firm as she said, "I'll wait in the car."

Alone on the beach, Cliff slowly put out the fire by kicking sand over it.

CLIFF knew now that he'd have to go away. As long as he stayed near Los Angeles he'd go on seeing Pat and he knew that she was right: they'd missed the boat. Things had moved too fast for them.

But he couldn't bring himself to tell the sarge he was going; he hated to leave Gunny alone in his boarding-house. The rest of the Group were all right. Matt Klein had married the buxom blonde cashier at Klein's Super Market. Old Five-by-Five would be taken care of as long as any member of the Group lived. There was just Gunny—

And then one day, as Cliff was leaving Horizon, he heard—

"Cliff!"

The voice behind him was timid, shaky. Cliff turned; for a moment he could not identify the little woman in the old-fashioned straw hat.

"I'm Mrs. Watrous, Gunny's missus."

"Why, sure. I remember you, Mrs. Watrous. How are you?"

"Just fine, Cliff."

She took a deep breath.

"Earl—my husband—he don't come home much any more, Cliff. I guess you know that."

Cliff was ill at ease.

"You know how it is, Mrs. Watrous. He's been busy. We all have."

"I know, Cliff. Only, today—I had to see him, that's all."

"He'll be along almost any time. If you just wait right here—"

"Thanks, Cliff."

GUNNY and Mrs. Watrous crossed the street with the light, her arm tucked into his. It seemed that they were strangers, yet the press of the years back of them was like a river on the legs of persons wading.

They had come abreast of a small lunch bar, and Gunny halted, a pleasant inspiration coming to him.

"Would you care for a cup of coffee, mother?"

Mrs. Watrous looked almost childishly pleased.

"I'd like it real well, Earl."

"Come on, then. Not that I'm promisin' how it will taste." The sarge risked a gallant jest. "'Tain't as if you'd made it, ma."

"Now, Earl Watrous. You stop making fun of me."

"No, I mean it. And the stuff we get at the plant—they *call* it coffee. I wouldn't give it to a hog!"

They seated themselves in the varnished-oak booth and the boy took their orders.

"Is the other food all right, Earl? And where you board—do you eat good there?"

"Pretty fair."

With a long gaze, her eyes built around his face the remembered lineaments of a younger, stouter Gunny.

"Cakes and sandwiches and stuff like that don't fill you up much," he amended. "That's what makes you hit the bottom of a lunch box quicker than you look for—"

A lunch box! That was no way, Emmy thought, for a man like the sarge to be eating.

"Sonny was asking for you."

This was a planned speech and it had its planned effect.

"Boy, I'll bet he's big now."

"He looks just wonderful. You know, Earl," Emmy went on quickly, tripping over the words to get them out before she lost her chance, "Dot thinks he looks like Bob, but I know better. He's the image of his granddad, that boy is. He's better built than Bob."

"Bob is built fine," Gunny said loyally.

"I know, Earl. But Sonny is broader in proportion. And he takes after you, too. Know what happened? One day he ran away. He was gone two hours. We couldn't find him. And where do you think he was?"

"Hadn't gone to the poolroom, had he?" Gunny asked jocosely.

Emmy looked dumbfounded. "Earl Watrous! However did you guess?"

"Honest! Was he there?"

"He surely was. We never even knew that you'd been taking him there. Posty, that boy that runs the place, finally called up the house."

"The little son of a gun!"

Emmy looked at the lunchroom sugar bowl, clotted where wet spoons had dipped in.

"Earl," Emmy said, "would you come home for a while? We're going to be all by ourselves like." With the nonchalance of a master strategist, Emmy tossed in the clincher: "Harry's leaving."

"Harry? Leaving? Why's he leaving?"

"Getting married."

Gunny burst into a laugh that bounced against the ceiling.

"So little Bopeep finally named the day! Well, dog my cats!"

"He's out in Azuza today making arrangements. I'm glad, Earl." Rebellion shone in Emmy's eyes. She quickly tempered it. "I mean it's right for Harry. It's time he married, time he had a home of his own."

Gunny was chuckling softly. "You'll be going over to his house, running it for him. Telling Bopeep how to cook his eggs and wash his shirts—"

"I will not. Not ever. Besides—there are other things I could do." She made another reckless plunge. "*We* could do things—you and me. The way you wanted to. We could go to shows and—I could cook for you."

Suddenly she began to cry, the large tears seeming too big for her eyes that shed them on the lined cheeks. "I was wrong not to go to Hilldale with you when you asked me. I've thought of it over and over. It was my fault—"

"Take it easy, mother."

Gunny spoke gruffly, afraid he would show emotion; this, in a man, always seemed shameful to him.

He spoke to the counter boy:

"Two more coffees—"

Gunny was fussing with his pipe.

"I can't stay, mother, but—well, I would like to see the place. And Dot and Sonny. You say Harry's in Azuza?"

"He'll be there all day. If you could come out just for a little while—"

"Mebbe, mebbe. Judas, this is lousy coffee!"

CLIFF was shaving when Gunny walked in next morning. The sarge still had on his best clothes; there was an air of mystery about him which invited comment.

"Had a talk with the missus. I'm going home," he said.

Cliff put down the razor. He carefully rinsed and wiped his face. "If you're not kidding, that's the smartest thing you've ever done."

"Why would I be kidding? I'm getting old; going to lay up for a spell. I ate me some good cooking yesterday. I sort of aim to eat some more of it."

Cliff stood blinking at the sarge with a foolish, happy expression. The sense of failure which had weighed on him so heavily was wonderfully lightened. At least Gunny would not share the Group's defeat; he would be out of it—he would be taking an old soldier's ease among the comforts he had dreamed of long ago.

"That's swell, sarge! That's great! Honest!"

"It will kind of ruin this set-up of ours. I could pay my half of the room until—"

"The hell you could. It ought to be worth the difference, getting rid of a crabby lug like you. I'll rent your half to a pin-up gal."

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By JOSEPH ANTHONY

"SOME historians are prone to treat the American Revolution almost apologetically, and to write with scant respect of some of the leaders in that transcendent event," **Claude G. Bowers** remarks in **The Young Jefferson.**

This attitude, Mr. Bowers believes, represents a sharp reaction from another, equally foolish, extreme—the old-fashioned habit of twisting the British lion's tail.

Claude G. Bowers

There is nothing apologetic about Mr. Bowers' portrait of Thomas Jefferson, the red-headed, bighearted author of the Declaration of Independence. It would be hard to read this sober, factual account without coming to the conclusion Jefferson was a giant among men.

Many of Jefferson's opinions, quoted by the biographer, are as timely today as when they were first expressed. The rods-and-hatchet emblem of Fascism was as much of an issue in Jefferson's time as it is now. When some politicians expressed the opinion we couldn't win the Revolution without a dictatorship, he warned: "Those who assume the right of giving away the reins of government must be sure that the herd to whom they hand on the rods and hatchet of the dictator will lay their heads on the block when he shall nod to them."

Telling of Jefferson's objection to "the perpetual re-eligibility of the President," because of the danger that it might lead to a monarchy, Mr. Bowers points out that his fears on this score eventually subsided. "When, years later, he could have had a third term, he based his declaration not on a principle but on his health and declining powers."

The Young Jefferson takes his career up to 1789, when he returned from his diplomatic mission and his ringside seat at the French Revolution.

Published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston. Price $3.75.

MOB 3, by **Captain Robert P. Parsons, U. S. N.,** is the story of a naval mobile hospital unit on a South Sea island which he calls Elysia.

Like a good reporter, Captain Parsons has placed the emphasis on what he saw and heard, instead of taking preconceived ideas with him. His observations on native life are as keen as any since White Shadows in the South Seas. This is his translation of the dialogue between a pair of Polynesian lovers:

Capt. Robert P. Parsons

"BILLY: If you love me so much why do I have to fight for the kiss?"

"ATI: That is the way the woman kisses. Fight first and then enjoy the kiss."

"BILLY: Don't tell me the lie. I know you do not enjoy the kiss."

"ATI: The kiss makes too much trouble."

"BILLY: It makes more trouble when you do not give the kiss. It makes me crazy."

"ATI: No, you get more crazy when I do kiss you, and that makes too much trouble for me."

"BILLY: Yes, it makes me crazy both ways, but the kiss way I can go home happy because it is a happy crazy. With no kiss it is a mad crazy."

Captain Parsons is equally readable in his serious vein, telling of the devotion and skill of the doctors under his command who refused to classify any wounded man as a hopeless case.

Published by the Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis. Price $2.75.

COCKEYED CROSSWORD

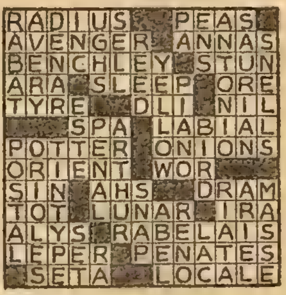
BY TED SHANE

HORIZONTAL

1 The radio has warned us a hundred times a day not to mess with him (three words)
10 K-9 commando
13 This never hardens
14 Hahlem canary
15 Long-hair jive
17 Eye plug
18 Mexican nuts
20 Cure (anag.)
22 Torso mechanic (abbr.)
23 First thing Kreisler played on
26 Chorus gal's beddie-by time (abbr.)
27 Ma Shane's terrible infant
28 Fizzickly fit
29 The old $19.75 bag with 2 prs. of pants
31 First glass stummick-ache
32 Despairing Smokers (abbr.)
33 Human hangnail
34 Morgenthau's mite
35 Collector's item (it's an M. D. honorarium)
37 Short-tongued
38 What Mumbly Peg is
40 Short cheer
41 Brass buttons, blue coat, They couldn't catch a billy goat!
42 Half qt.
43 Aromatic Rumanians (abbr.)
44 It took pluck to kil' folks with these
46 Smelly piece of dough
47 After afterthought (abbr.)
48 This foolish thing reminds me of you
49 Tanks
50 Leaders in task force
51 Twitch out a Lana Turner chest protector
53 Lacking moola
54 Old-time no-pants bags
57 It's forbidding
58 Bob Burns is doing his best to eliminate this (abbr.)
59 Muscle juice
61 Undie Crawl (abbr.)
62 Musical meemies
64 The Leaping Lady of the Naughty-motive '20s
65 A peachy state (abbr.)
66 Aerial jaloppy
68 Golf with fertilizer
70 Not now
72 A low island
73 Home-front heroes, listen to your beef, gas, and the old oil, see a point in everything (two words)

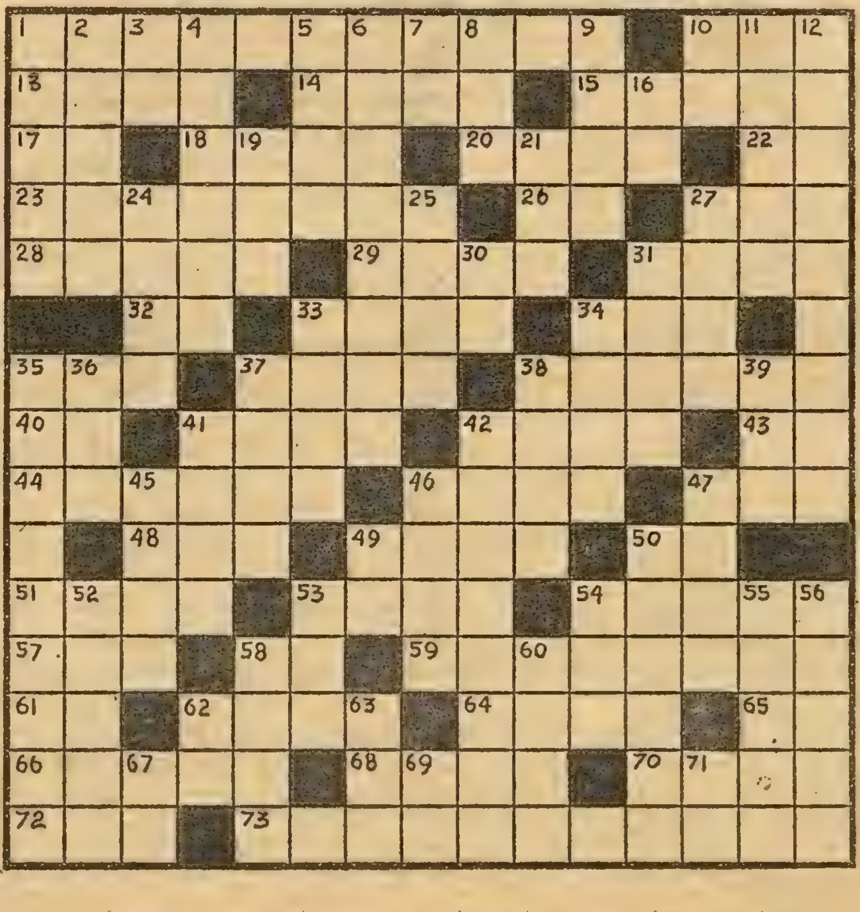
VERTICAL

1 Inner-tube fillers
2 Commercials with musical interruptions and screams
3 Ain't not
4 A priceless pair
5 "—— homo!"
6 It's impossible to tell if these are male or female
7 Half wood
8 Tomorrow's lamb chops
9 Graphic thing
10 A couple of I's
11 Shakespeare's forest
12 Earth scratchers
16 What to say when contacting an odor
19 Uninterested in women
21 Old-fashioned rat-trap
24 All off at the burlesque house
25 An A priority
27 Vain rainy-night cry
30 You chase me!
31 What hot dogs do in August
33 K-9 commando-ettes
34 A toga in a pinch; G. I. waldorf
35 Man to send out to retrieve escaped war criminals (two words)
36 Human flap
37 Big squirts
38 Hitler's invented some devilish ones
39 Place a big business man rests his bulge
41 Never mind this, how many red points?
42 Would-be dictator
45 World's biggest collection of drips
46 The state of Alaska
47 Crossing watcher on the royal train
49 Partly soused
50 Yesterday's peach is today's what?
52 Pearl's mama
53 Pea portfolio
54 Can goods
55 Ire-ish quality
56 Hardest thing to do straight after thirty beers
58 It's used for the last ride
60 Technicolored lights
62 Kind of tic
63 Has a great pick-up
67 O. K.
69 What we hope they'll make Hitler say yet
71 Minne Ha's last name



RADIUS■■PEAS■
AVENGER■ANNAS
BENCHLEY■STUN
ARA■SLEEP■ORE
TYRE■■DLII■NIL
■■■SPA■LABIAL
POTTER■ONIONS
ORIENT■WOR■■■
SIN■AHS■■DRAM
TOT■LUNAR■IRA
ALYS■RABELAIS
LEPER■PENATES
■SETA■■LOCALE

Last week's answer



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

"It's so smart...so easy...so delightful to serve ROMA Sauterne"

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The Sirens. Ship wreckers. Flagged passing sailors with what looked like Allen-A shorts. Very successful. And why not? Who could pass up anything so comfortable-looking?

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UNDERWEAR
HOSIERY
SPORTSWEAR

I'M PROUD TO BELONG

Continued from Page 23

din of Pearl Harbor still ringing in their ears. Private Lou Richman, for example, fought with the Seventy-seventh Division in World War I, volunteered again this time, and somehow managed to get back into the fight with his old outfit. He didn't have to—he is fifty-four years old. Many other men of the Division could have claimed draft exemptions. Many gave up well-established positions in their communities to fight for the way they want to live.

The friendly, co-operative spirit in this Division was clearly evident in the relationships between men of the Seventy-seventh and both Navy and Marine personnel. On Guam, soldiers and sailors fought side by side, shared rations and their few meager comforts during the campaign. One infantry regiment acquired the marine-bestowed title of "——th Marines" because of the speed with which they moved against the enemy. The average age of the marines is far below that of my men, and during one attack the marines whooped joyously, "Look at the old men go!" There was a lot of razzing back and forth, but underneath it all was a spirit of mutual respect—a desire to get the job done together.

After the Battle of Guam was officially declared over, a rifle battalion of the Seventy-seventh was detailed to clean out a draw in the jungle which contained numerous well-fortified caves and an unknown number of Japs. The Ninth Marine Regiment, relieved from fighting in the front line, was ordered back to bivouac in this area and was in the process of establishing its regimental command post on a hill overlooking the draw when the battalion started its attack. Doughboys moved through the C. P., dropped their packs alongside the Marine colonel's tent, set up mortars and 37-mm. guns, and went on down into the draw. Two companies were used in the assault, and one was kept in reserve near the Marine C. P. While the two companies were fighting, the marines invited the reserve company into their mess tents for hot chow and coffee. As soon as that company was fed, it went down into the draw and relieved another company, which then came back for Marine chow.

No arrangements had been made for this. Junior Marine and Army officers just worked it out themselves, with no fuss or bother. Marines who weren't otherwise occupied sat on top of the hill and watched the show in the valley below. They enjoyed it, and we enjoyed the chow. Everybody was happy, just because of co-operation. Do you begin to understand why I am proud to belong to the Seventy-seventh Division?

ACHIEVING the proper relationship between officers and enlisted men is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks of all in a civilian army, but I think it has been accomplished in this Division. Judge for yourself from these stories:

During the assault on Barrigada, one of our rifle platoons had formed a skirmish line along the edge of a road when they were isolated from the rest of their unit by heavy enemy machine-gun, rifle, and tank fire. The only cover available was a stone house across the road. Lieutenant Willis Munger, a platoon leader, led fifteen of his men to it and organized them for a last-ditch stand. On the way to the house, one man was hit and fell to the ground. After the rest were safely inside, Lieutenant Munger went back under fire and carried the wounded man to the house. The situation grew steadily worse as the enemy fire increased. Artillery shells started falling and it looked rather hopeless for those in the house. Lieutenant Munger told his men: "If anyone wants to leave, he can go ahead. I wouldn't blame him. But I'm sticking." Nothing was said. There were no heroics. But every man stayed and continued fighting.

Relief finally came in the form of intense friendly fire on the Jap positions, and Munger was ordered to evacuate the house and rejoin his company. Enemy fire was still heavy when he said, "We've got to make a break for it. Take the wounded out first. I wish you all luck." That was the last order he issued to his men. He was the last to leave the house and was killed as he did so. But he got all his men out before he died.

Lieutenant William P. DeBrocke is regarded as "one of the best" by unanimous vote of the men who knew and served under him. In the words of one of them, "He'd go right up and poke his head in anything." Because he was like that, DeBrocke was severely wounded while on a patrol in enemy territory. His scouts were fired on by Japs concealed in the dense jungle growth. He went forward himself to investigate and was wounded. Suffering from painful and almost fatal chest wounds, he insisted on remaining on his feet and leading his men in the action until the Japs were routed. When things calmed down, his men improvised a stretcher and started to carry him back along the tortuous four-mile route to the nearest aid station. All the way back he kept asking them to let him get up and walk because it was too hard for them to carry him, but they refused. His most serious remark was, "I'll beat all you guys to the ice-cream sodas now."

BUT that spirit of the Seventy-seventh doesn't stop there. Both men and officers will go through hell to help a wounded buddy. Every battle is full of stories of heroism on the part of the medics who rescue and treat wounded men under fire, often at the cost of their own lives. But that is, after all, their job. The story is a little different when a man risks his life to help others when it isn't his job.

Staff Sergeant Charles F. Brennan was one of those men. He was supply sergeant of his company, and normally would not be at all concerned with the evacuation of the wounded. But when the fighting got pretty stiff around Barrigada and the numbers of wounded mounted, he answered a call for volunteer litter bearers. He made two trips across a wide-open field swept by enemy machine guns, and evacuated two wounded soldiers. If you asked him why he did it, he would probably tell you he didn't want to lose any of his company's equipment.

One dark night the Japs infiltrated into a position occupied by a platoon led by Lieutenant Stanley H. Clemans. In the exchange of fire which followed, one of Clemans' men was badly hit. He fell back into his slit trench and was almost covered by the water in it. Clemans, with grenade fragments and bullets plopping into the mud all around him, dragged the man out, sheltered and warmed him with his own body, and treated his wounds until daylight.

But it's not only on battlefields that the men of the Seventy-seventh show great heart. They show it, too, toward the innocent victims of war. A patrol returning from the Jap-held southern half of Guam during the early days of the battle brought word that there was a large number of natives concentrated in and around the town of Merizo, but that about 200 of

(*Continued on page 58*)

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No matter what your taste prefers...you'll find it here in America. Ham from Virginia ... cheese from Wisconsin ... crisp lettuce from Texas ... spiced meats from Illinois—today you won't find their equal anywhere else in the world.

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(Continued from page 56)

them would need medical attention before they could be moved. Staff Sergeant Harry A. Kolata and Private First Class James J. Walker, Jr., were not concerned with civil affairs—they belonged to the medical detachment of an infantry regiment—but they volunteered to go down and do what they could for the natives. There were no roads to Merizo. It was seven miles away through the toughest jungle they had seen, and the area was still completely under Japanese control. The two men made the trip through this dangerous terrain, stayed overnight, treated the sick and injured until their medical supplies were exhausted, and returned the next day with 1,500 Chamorros following them.

Another time a regiment brought in a group of about 2,000 natives from the vicinity of Minengang in the northern part of the island. All of them were taken to American camps, clothed, fed, and housed. There were old men and women, little children, pregnant women, and women with babies in their arms. The Baptist minister of the island, Chamorro Joaquin Sablan, said to the first soldier he saw, "If I were a Frenchman, I think I would kiss you." A grinning toothless old woman tried to give her only possession, a pig, to the Division Civil Affairs officer. The children didn't say much, but their joy was evident in the silence enjoined by a mouthful of American candy.

They felt free again and safe because liberty had landed in the form of hundreds of grimy, muddy soldiers whose emblem, appropriately enough, was the Statue of Liberty, and who believed profoundly in their self-written motto: "Ours to hold it high."

War and life away from home haven't changed the religious outlook of these men, either. They still get the same comfort out of going to church that they did in the old home town—and maybe they go even a little more often out here, where each time may be the last. Services were conducted at every opportunity during the campaign, some of them under fire. Captain Bernard A. Healey, Catholic chaplain with an infantry regiment, was conducting a service one morning when the still air was rent by the whine of Japanese bullets. The members of the congregation killed twenty-nine of a Jap raiding party. Then the service was resumed as if nothing had happened.

MUCH could be told about the men's self-discipline. The greatest test of endurance the Seventy-seventh faced was when they marched across the island, cutting it in two to pave the way for the final drive northward. Their objective was about eighteen miles away—eighteen miles of mud, jungle, cliffs, heat, rain, and insects. They had to cross ravines where it was necessary to cut steps to climb down one side, and then cut steps to climb up the other. There was no possibility of supplying them for a couple of days at the best, so they had to carry their ammunition, rations, and water with them. Nobody dreamed they could do it in less than two days. And even that would give the Japs forty-eight hours more to prepare better defenses in the north. So they did it in one day. How and why they did it is probably best answered by Private Charles Blondi, who later was cited for rescuing four men from burning tanks as Jap machine guns blasted at him. His answer was, "We just had a job to do. and kept on going. We learned that in this outfit from the start."

Just because they had a job to do! Of course I'm proud to belong. Who wouldn't be?

THE END

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"The best part of living around here is that your Pepsi-Cola is always nice and cold!"

THE MAN WHO WILL SUCCEED STALIN

Continued from Page 19

man, did Leningrad hold out. And Leningrad's stand nailed down a German army group of some forty divisions which, employed elsewhere, might have carried the Nazis to victory over Russia.

Zhdanov raised and trained, a citizen army that proved a thorn in the enemy's side, an army which, when the time came, struck back and thwarted the scheme of a would-be conqueror. For it was Leningrad divisions that drove the Germans from the Baltic countries and then pushed on into East Prussia, first to set foot on enemy soil. Therefore Leningraders contend that November 14, 1941, was the actual turning point of the war.

When at long last the siege was broken, the names of Govorov, Zelenkov, and other Red Army generals appeared in the official victory bulletins. But the people of Leningrad had another name on their lips, that of a man who declined all official credit—Andrei Zhdanov.

Zhdanov's great reward was already decided. While the matter is not talked about publicly for obvious reasons, it is an open secret that Stalin has made a political will, and in this will Andrei Zhdanov is named his successor. The Supreme Soviet has conferred upon Zhdanov the rank of colonel general, just one step below that of marshal. It is the highest military appointment given to a purely political leader and establishes Zhdanov's authority within the Red Army as well.

ANDREI ZHDANOV is not of the Bolshevik Old Guard. He never was a deportee to Siberia or a political exile abroad. The man whose political views are fated to guide the future course of one sixth of the world is the son of a parish priest. His parents, by no means wealthy, managed to send him to a gymnasium, which was about the equivalent of our high school, although both tuition and textbooks, also uniforms, had to be paid for. Graduated with high honors, he was slated for priesthood and about to enter a seminary when World War I intervened. Drafted into the Czarist army, he fought with valor and distinction. And it was during this service that he gained a thorough insight into the corruption of the old regime. He learned how things should *not* be done.

Came the revolution, and Zhdanov seized the chance to put some of his own ideas into practice. He helped form soviets among the soldiers and proved to be an orator capable of swaying the mass mind. During the Civil War he organized workers' battalions for the defense of Leningrad against the White Army of General Yudenitch. And this previous experience in defending the city on the Neva River served him well when he organized its immortal stand against the Nazis.

It was during those Civil War days that Zhdanov and this reporter first met under circumstances that laid the foundation for a lasting friendship. Zhdanov was young and enthusiastic for the people's cause. But he already felt that the Soviets should strive to build a great Socialist Russia rather than attempt to bring about world revolution.

His rise up the once shaky ladder of party hierarchy was slow but steady. As a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Leningrad soviet, he could look into international matters. They fascinated him, and he has been an ardent student of foreign affairs ever since. It was largely

(Continued on page 60)

Taps

The tumult of battle has ended,
And the living their blankets have spread.
The shadows of night have descended
Like a curtain to shelter the dead.

Then hark to the bugles playing
With notes silvery clear, as a bell.
'Tis the soldiers' divine way of saying:
"God keep you, our dead, and farewell."

by Lt. Frank William Quinn
Commanding Officer
152nd Bomb Disposal Squad

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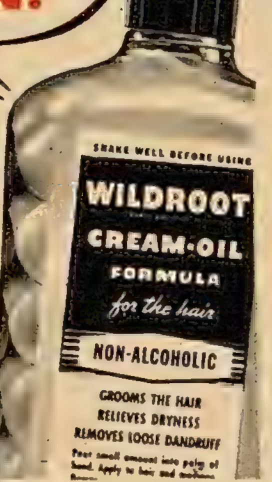
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(Continued from page 58)

his sharp grasp of international matters that brought him to the attention of Kirov, then political boss of Leningrad and one of the nine members of the Politburo, the body that actually decides the domestic and foreign course of the Russian ship of state. Eventually he became Kirov's right-hand man, the power behind the throne. It was Kirov who directed the destinies of the huge Leningrad political district and wielded a potent influence in the Politburo. It was Zhdanov who guided Kirov and made the real decisions.

Zhdanov enjoys the reputation of being right. When the great split in the Politburo occurred, he urged Kirov to take Stalin's side as against Trotzky, Zinoviev, and their adherents. Kirov was assassinated by dissident Trotzkyites. Zhdanov took his place as political boss and conducted the purges with ruthless determination. He adopted the view that there must be one unified will in the building up of Russia as a world power.

Admitted to full membership in the Politburo, Zhdanov quickly became Stalin's close friend. The two men thought singularly alike. Many were the times when Stalin allowed Zhdanov's counsel to prevail over that of his other associates in the Politburo. Today Zhdanov's trips to Moscow are frequent and of the utmost importance. When a fateful decision is to be reached, he and Stalin sometimes are closeted for days. Once announced, the decision is made to stick.

Zhdanov never had any use for the Comintern except as an instrument to stir up trouble within those nations whose leaders wanted trouble for the Soviet Union. He is a firm believer in Russia's great destiny. He wanted Russia to become strong within herself. Once strong, Russia would have nothing to fear and could live in peace with the rest of the world. He is against any conquest of foreign nations by force of arms. Direct Russian rule over peoples alien to the Russian point of view would only create trouble for Russia herself, he contends.

Zhdanov's ideal is Peter the Great. He is an ardent admirer of the great czar who lifted Russia from barbarism by the sheer force of his will. Zhdanov holds that in some respects Russia still has a good deal to learn from the Western World. He looks upon Leningrad as the "Window into Europe" which Czar Peter created and which must be preserved and safeguarded.

IT was Zhdanov who insisted that Russia give up isolationism and once again take a firm hand in European affairs. It was he who built the great fortifications system around Leningrad, contending that if Leningrad were lost to some foreign power, Russia would be thrown back into barbarism. It was also Zhdanov who in 1939 loudly demanded seizure of the Baltic states and eastern Finland and persisted in his demand through the dark days of 1941–42.

Once again events proved him right. His personal prestige and his reputation for political sagacity are tremendously enhanced. Today he is not only boss of Leningrad but also of the Baltic countries and, in fact if not in name, of Finland. There is no one throughout the vast Soviet realm who would question his right to take over the helm if Stalin should pass away.

Originally Zhdanov was secretary of the Communist Party in the Leningrad district. As such, he recommended aspirants for all important party jobs, and his recommendations were equivalent to appointment. Today his personal power is tremendous. In his military capacity he presides over the entire defense system of the Leningrad district, including the Baltic Fleet. As a member of the Politburo, whose regular sessions in Moscow he attends, he exercises a potent influence on the entire domestic and foreign policy of the Soviet Union. To this has been added his chairmanship of the Allied Control Commission in Finland, which takes him frequently to Helsinki. Translated into American terms, he combines the functions of party boss with those of military and economic dictator over one of the most important regions of the Soviet Union.

In his personal relations Zhdanov is good-natured and likable. He has a great sense of humor, typically Russian. There is nothing about him that would suggest a forceful leader and ruthless politician. His round face, with its good-humored eyes, short-clipped mustache, and double chin, rather resembles the face of a typical American butcher or baker. In his late forties, he is medium-sized and stocky, a bit inclined to stoutness, although he neither eats nor drinks in excess. He hates sumptuous state banquets and shuns them. He speaks with a slight hoarseness, the result of soapbox oratory in his younger days.

THOUGH a potent factor in world affairs, Zhdanov deliberately keeps out of the spotlight. He abhors press publicity more than any other leader in the Soviet Union. No foreign correspondent has been able to get an interview with him. If anything is to be said for publication in the foreign press on behalf of the Soviet government, it is strictly a matter for Marshal Stalin or the men assigned by him to the handling of foreign press relations. As leader of the Leningrad district, or even as a member of the all-powerful Politburo, Zhdanov has no statements of an international nature to make; such matters are attended to by others.

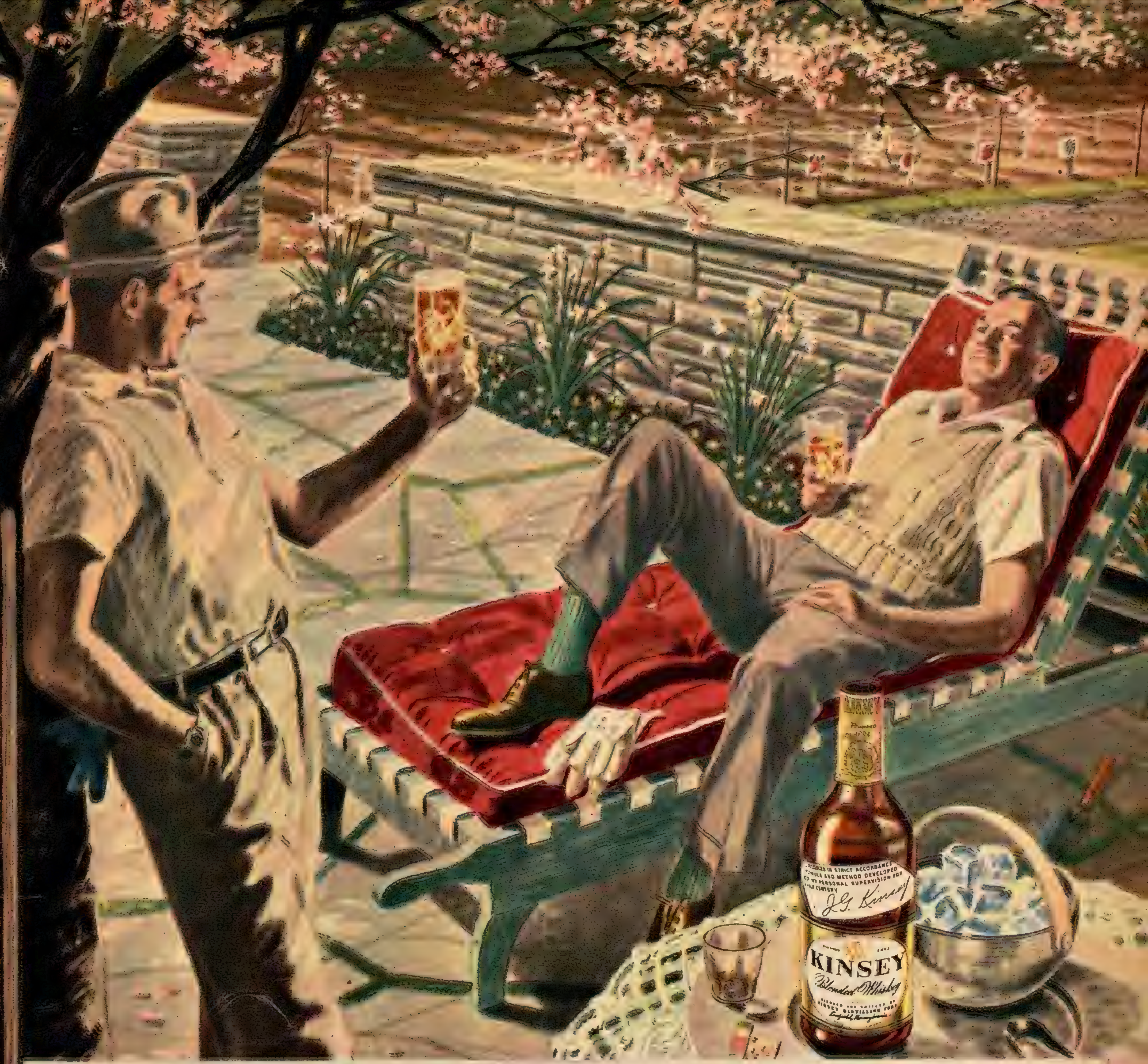
The Communist Party demands exemplary personal behavior of its ranking members, and Zhdanov's family life is beyond question. He dresses simply. The eight-room apartment which he occupies with his family is modestly furnished. While he could undoubtedly be a wealthy man in the American sense of the word, there are no outward indications that he is. All expenses connected with his official functions are of course taken care of by the State treasury. Once, when questioned on the subject of money, he replied simply, "The Socialist State provides me and my family with everything we need. Beyond that, money does not mean a thing."

He is not the least bit reluctant to talk with friends who he knows will not abuse his confidences. Sometimes he completely relaxes in an armchair with a bottle of Crimean wine and exchanges thoughts on almost any subject. On such occasions he reveals an uncanny knowledge of world affairs.

His striving is for Russia's greatness, first and foremost. Russia, he avers, is prepared to maintain the friendliest of relations with other nations on a basis of equality and mutual trust. She harbors no designs harmful to any of the free nations of the world. But at the same time there can be no more of the treatment which the Soviet Union received from certain powers up to the turning point of this war. If Russia is made the target of distrust and cast in the utterly undeserved role of international outlaw, as was once the case, she will simply go her own way and let the rest of the world stew in its own juice.

As between Stalin and Zhdanov, there is no basic difference. Whichever of them is at the helm of the Russian ship of state, its course will remain the same.

THE END



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THE RIVER

Continued from Page 21

He put the thought behind him. He had undertaken to prove to hardheaded Parley that he could hold his own in the rough-and-tumble of business—yes, even in a hustling match against aggressive Lex.

He went out once more upon the water below Thunder Rapid and drifted for a while in the circular eddy. And after two hours of counsel taking with the river, his pipe and his mind furiously busy, a kind of wisdom came to him, as he had known it would.

He rowed for the beach and lifted his skiff up onto the waiting trailer that he had brought down through the dugway.

This time an actual figure was waiting at the top of the cliffs when he emerged. She said, "Steve."

He stopped his car and she climbed up beside him. In the presence of this mystery and wonder of a child turned woman he was hopelessly tongue-tied. And she said little. She stood by while he put boat and trailer into their shed. Finally she said, "Did the river tell you what to do this time, Stephen?"

"It told me what to try to do, Ellie. The rest is up to me."

"Stephen!"

He looked at her. She said nothing more. She returned his look quietly, steadily. As she had done that day when she was sixteen; that day while he stood at the blackboard (demonstrating $x = a \times b$) and had suddenly found himself stupid and petrified and electrified.

He waved and she waved, and presently she was lost from sight.

Stephen's car had been old for years before he bought it. But it still knew how to run. He turned its nose up the long road north and west through a chaotic landscape of wind-worn arches and red sand shingled with sagebrush.

This way led into a populous valley which Lex Roache was working. Farms were strung along like beads. Any dwelling here could be a prospect; in a lifetime Lex couldn't call on all of them. But Stephen left the rich region to Lex, stopping only once in each town. He stopped at the general stores, not to sell but to buy. He bought bottles of commercial stock dip until he had a wide assortment.

That first evening, camping in a windy slick-rock gully, he collected cattle ticks from the buckbrush and shad-scale bushes and experimented. By every comparison Parley's formula was superior. Stephen then read the Crescent Water Softener booklet by the light of his campfire. He read it from cover to cover, and traced through its diagrams the function of zeolite, the softening agent, in dealing with the salts of hard water. He finished by making a little test Parley had told him for measuring the waste or saving of household soap.

In the morning he continued for miles without stopping except for gas. Salt Lake City. Ogden. Toward evening, Pocatello. The next day at Butte, Montana, he turned east. At sundown he passed under a high gate decked with buffalo horns. The ranch house was a long way from the gate. He was accepted for supper with dignity and attention, as became a far traveler. He stayed four days.

He had entered upon a peculiar odyssey, and he continued it. South, tarrying a week near Cheyenne. South to New Mexico. West for Los Angeles, observing developments beyond the Arizona-California border with close interest. Some days in Los Angeles; then north until he came to Winnemucca in Nevada; and south again, zigzagging by dim roads or no roads, and stopping occasionally to scale some point of rock. In a region of tumbled lava where no grass showed and the only green was an expanse of emerald-colored gravelly sand, he dry camped several nights. On for Los Angeles.

He was in that city two weeks this time, and the stay in a cheap hotel fretted him. On the fifty-sixth day after the talk with Parley he swung out of Los Angeles, got as far as Pasadena, thought of something, made an abrupt U turn which cost him a police tag, and went back. It was one o'clock when he made the violent turnabout, four o'clock when he once more faced east. He spent that night under a smoke tree on the desert, the next at the rim of the Grand Canyon, and two days later was in Gilead.

IT was the sixtieth day. Ellie was away. Stephen got his boat out of its shed, slid it into the water above Thunder Rapid, and this time kept on going for three hundred miles. He saw no other human being, but he passed through a chain of gorges whose red-stone walls stood like rows of silent windowless houses, fabulously floodlighted. Brown water streets entering from the sides—the Colorado, the Dirty Devil, the San Juan—added their torrents under his boat. He stopped at the two-man settlement of Lee's Ferry not far from the head of the Grand Canyon, leaving his skiff to be picked up later.

From this purifying voyage Stephen returned to Gilead by thumb and bus.

He cleaned up and went to the Ferguson house where Lex, Ellie, and factual, plain-dealing Parley were gathered on the porch. Lex looked up at Stephen with an expression that was inquiring but amused. Parley looked inquiring but noncommittal. Ellie looked unconcerned and wholly adorable

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The kind that makes a guy look slick!
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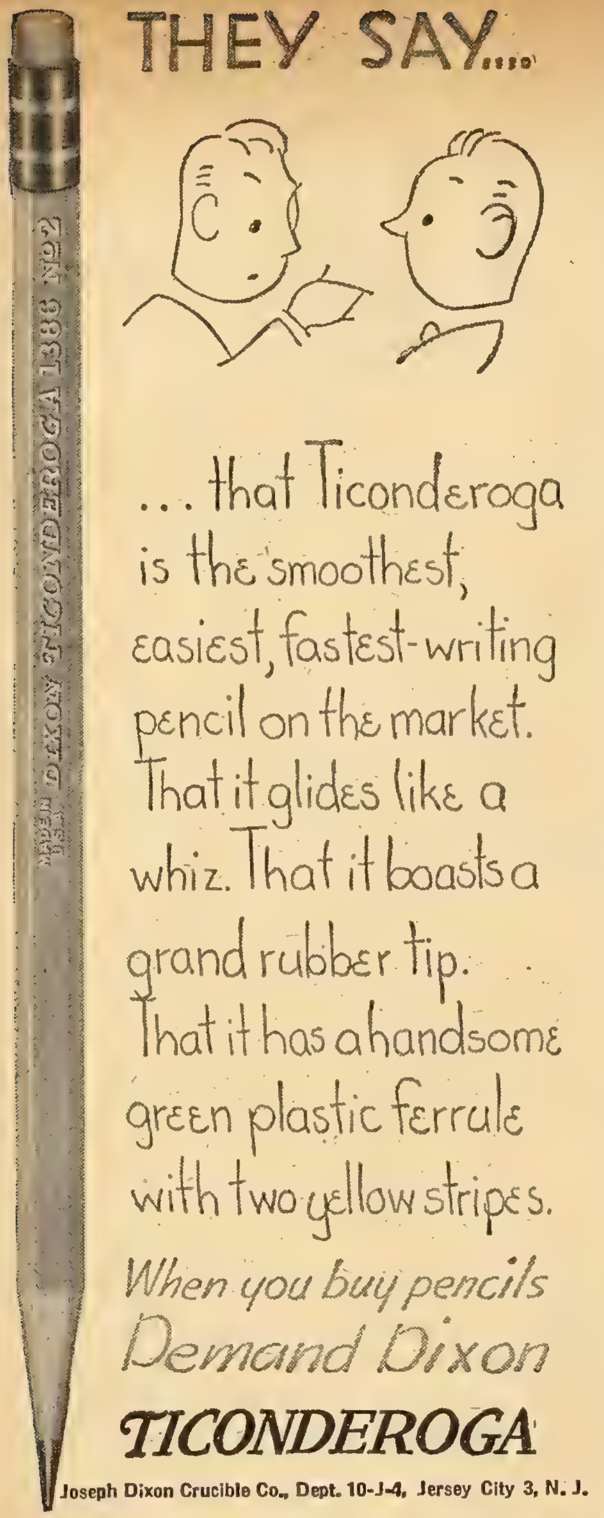

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as she smoothed out her blue-and-white freshly-made chambray dress. Lex was talkative and entertaining; he had had the usual crop of human encounters and they all were fun.

After supper the three men returned to the porch, Ellie and Mrs. Ferguson staying inside to do the dishes.

"Let's see. I believe it's September the twenty-third," remarked Parley.

"The hundredth day," mentioned Lex.

"I take it that I'm s'posed," Parley said, "to call for reports. Lex, you begin. The Uncle Sam Livestock Dip."

LEX drew a notebook from his pocket and opened it with an air of studied accuracy. "Well, it's been fair. Six farms a day on an average, and two sales. Six hundred calls and two hundred sales. That all right, Parley?"

"Right as showers, Lex. Shows good smart scratching. Stephen, what did you manage to do with the Uncle Sam?"

"Four calls. Three sales," said Stephen.

The silence on the porch was audible.

"Four calls," repeated Parley at last. "More than three months to do 'em in." He turned to Lex. "About your other line, son. What's your word on the water softener?"

Lex made another business of referring to his notebook. "Six calls a day. One sale a week. Fourteen softeners. Though I think I'll close two more."

"You, Stephen?"

"One call. No sale."

Parley sucked on his pipe a while. Ellie came out and sat down quietly.

"Well, son," said Parley to Lex finally, "you say two hundred gallons of dip? I'll have to hump to find the jugs."

"Why, no, Parley, I said two hundred sales. They average one point six gallons a sale, or three hundred twenty gallons."

Stephen spoke. "Lex is making use of his algebra, Parley. *x*, meaning gallons, is sales times gallons per sale."

"Algebra or whatever, he got in and dug," said Parley. "But you, Stephen—what were you doing with your time?"

"Checking the school geography. I found it's dead right. Idaho lies north of Utah, Montana is east and north of Idaho, Wyoming south of Montana, and New Mexico a good jump south of Wyoming—"

"The school board examined that geography, Stephen, before we adopted it. It's just as I've said about you. You're a waster and a hider. It's that river. It's addled you."

Stephen said, "I went to Montana because that's where the M Bar M Ranch is."

"The M Bar M!" Parley said, startled. Parley knew cattle.

"From there I went to Wyoming, because I wanted to see the Warbonnet Ranch."

Lex exclaimed, "The Warbonnet!" Lex knew sheep.

"The other two I visited were the Lazy Lightning in Nevada and the Rincon Verde in New Mexico."

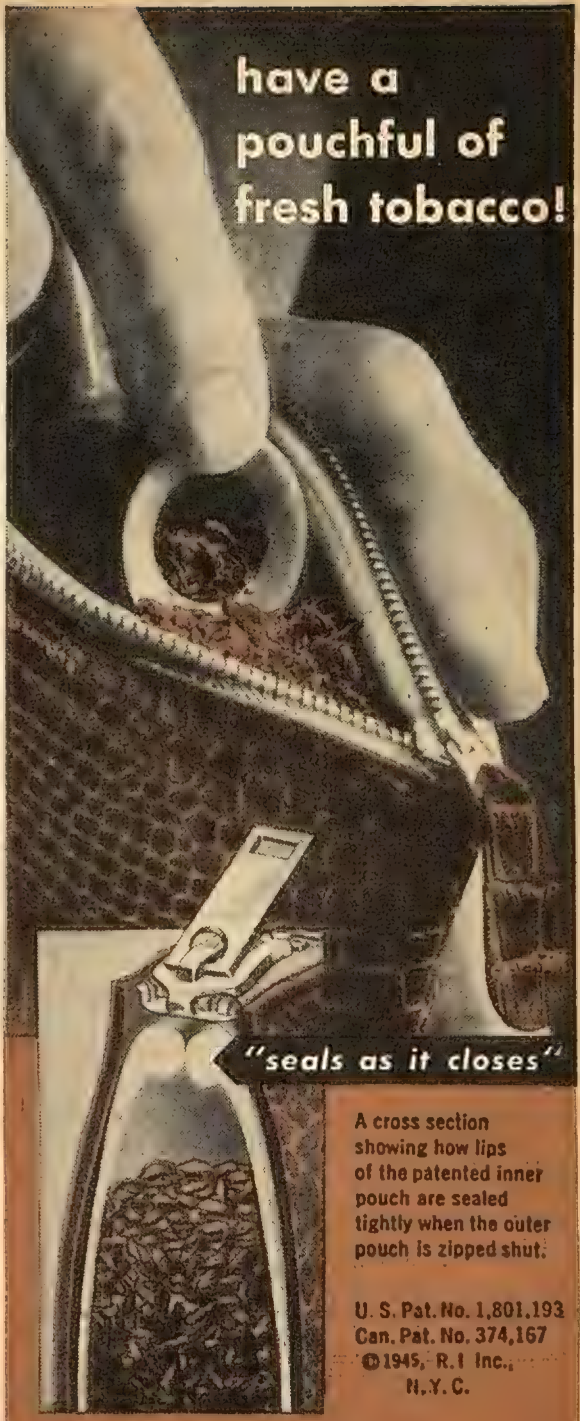
"The Rincon Verde!" said Parley. "Why, that's close to being the biggest in the United States. There's a million acres in that ranch. Though the Lazy Lightning and the Warbonnet—"

"The Lazy Lightning turned me down, even when I showed them what happens to a tick in a two-per-cent solution of other dips and a one-per-cent of yours, Parley. But I made three sales. A hundred units each."

"Three hundred gallons," totted Parley, not trying to conceal his surprise. "Now I will be stumped for jugs. Stephen, why didn't you tell me this at once?"

"But I sold three hundred twenty gallons. I'm still ahead," pointed out Lex.

Stephen observed, "I didn't say gallons, Parley. Units. Three hundred units of fifty-



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gallon drums. I hated knocking at the doors of a lot of people, so I cut the number of calls 'way down and made each sale a real one. Of course, I had to cover a lot of country to reach those big users."

Lex looked a little shaken. "But—the softener," he reminded. "I sold fourteen of those. You say you didn't sell one?"

"That's right. Water softeners are another story. I have nothing to show but one bare prospect. I couldn't have closed that deal in twice a hundred days, either. I admit failure. It's the city of Los Angeles."

Parley cried, "The what?"

"They get their water chiefly from the Colorado at Parker Dam, below Boulder, and they're very proud of their new source of supply; but the Colorado system is pretty hard water, as we know who live here on its upper tributary. I called on the mayor and asked his secretary to draw tap water into a bottle. I let liquid soap into the bottle drop by drop, same as you taught me, and I shook the bottle after each drop. It took sixteen drops of soap before the lather was stiff. Then I took a bottle of soft water, put in one drop of soap, shook it, and the suds stood up like a fence. The mayor sent for the city engineer."

"But, Stephen! Los Angeles—"

"Four hundred million gallons a day come through that aqueduct. If fifty thousand tons of zeolite were in the right spot to filter that water as it goes, five hundred thousand Southern California homes would each save a couple dollars a month in soap. The mayor would have a million voters with grateful hearts and longer lasting shirts."

"But the chemicals to do this—"

"All the greensand zeolite you could ask for is lying out in south central Nevada. Nobody seems to want it, so I've filed on it. And Great Salt Lake has enough brine to regenerate the zeolite for a thousand years. You may want to take up such a sizable installation with the Crescent people, Parley. I suppose they hold the patents. But as a deal, I warn that it's all wrapped up in ifs. There will have to be engineering studies, newspaper ballyhoo, bond issues. I don't bank on it."

LEX was awestruck. "But, Steve, the thing could net you millions. How did you hit on it?"

"I suppose I should say it's all in the chemistry, algebra and geography you had in school, Lex, but that wouldn't be fair. I got the idea for my summer from a better teacher than you ever had. I mean the river. A fellow learns a lot of things as he goes down through those gorges in a little boat. He learns to lay out a route through each rapid before he starts, and it had better be a good one. And the size of the cliffs down there sort of enlarges his scope. I've been thinking: If Los Angeles takes up with my scheme, there'll be thousands of tons of zeolite to haul—that means freight for somebody. And a pipe line from Salt Lake. That means steel. You might care to take hold of those matters. And of course, if San Francisco should wish to have soft water, or maybe New York—"

"Steve Pringle," said Lex after drawing a long breath, "it's a wonder you didn't try to sell the Grand Canyon itself."

"Oh. I forgot," said Stephen. "I did sell the Canyon." He explained, "It's always struck me that Hollywood ought to make a movie of small boats full of white men and Indians chasing each other down that gulch, for it's the biggest hole on the face of the earth, it's full of sound and action in the depths, and it's almost in the studios' back yard.

"I was leaving town when I remembered, and I turned around and went back and asked to see a man named Mayer. Louis Mayer. They didn't want to let me in, so

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I went to a drugstore and phoned him: 'I have a ten-billion-dollar set all built for your next super-colossal. It's equipped with full lighting effects. It's in storage only two hundred miles from here.'

"He barked, 'What are you talking about?' I told him, 'The Grand Canyon. There's a river at the bottom with the strength of three hundred thousand horses, and there are two hundred and six rapids, dropping two thousand feet, between Lee's Ferry and Boulder Dam.' He boomed, 'My location people know that. But how is anybody to get through down there? My actors have necks, you know.' I replied, 'I have the boats that will do it. I've run it twice and I'll take them through. I have the golden key to the big front door.'

"So he invited: 'Come right around, and don't stop to see Sam Goldwyn,' and when I got there he already had his scenario department at work, and he had me sign some papers and gave me this as an advance." Stephen showed the check. Lex and Parley blinked. "He also promised to take care of a tag I got for making a U turn in Pasadena."

Lex rose. "I'm due to make a call in Pleasant City tonight, to try and close for one more water softener." He added respectfully, "I'd like very much to talk with you again, Steve, about those projects you mentioned." Parley, with jugs and drums and creosote and carbolic to send for and a truly astonishing letter to write to the Crescent people, went with Lex as far as the store.

Stephen found himself alone on the porch with Ellie. He wanted to tell her something very, very important, and for once in his life wished he knew how a born salesman begins.

Ellie, sitting there in the blue-and-white dress that she had made, said an odd thing to interrupt his meditation. She declared, "I don't want it to go through, either."

"Eh?"

"That big deal with Los Angeles. I don't want you to be rich. I want you to be as you are, and live right here."

"And teach school," said Stephen eagerly.

"And teach school."

"And have a house in Silver Glen."

"A little, little house in Silver Glen."

"And go out on the river."

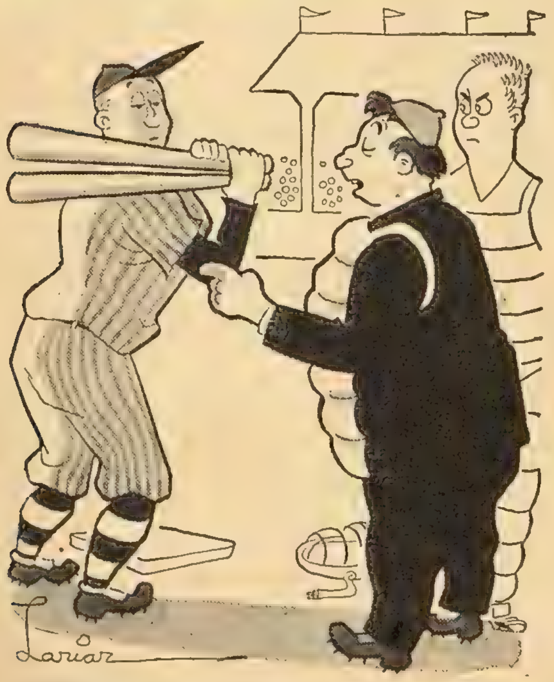
"And go out on the river and down the river, and hear what it has to say."

"Let's go down to its bank and listen to it together. Now," said Stephen, coming to his feet.

"That's what I'd like, too," said Ellie.

THE END

THE HOME FRONT



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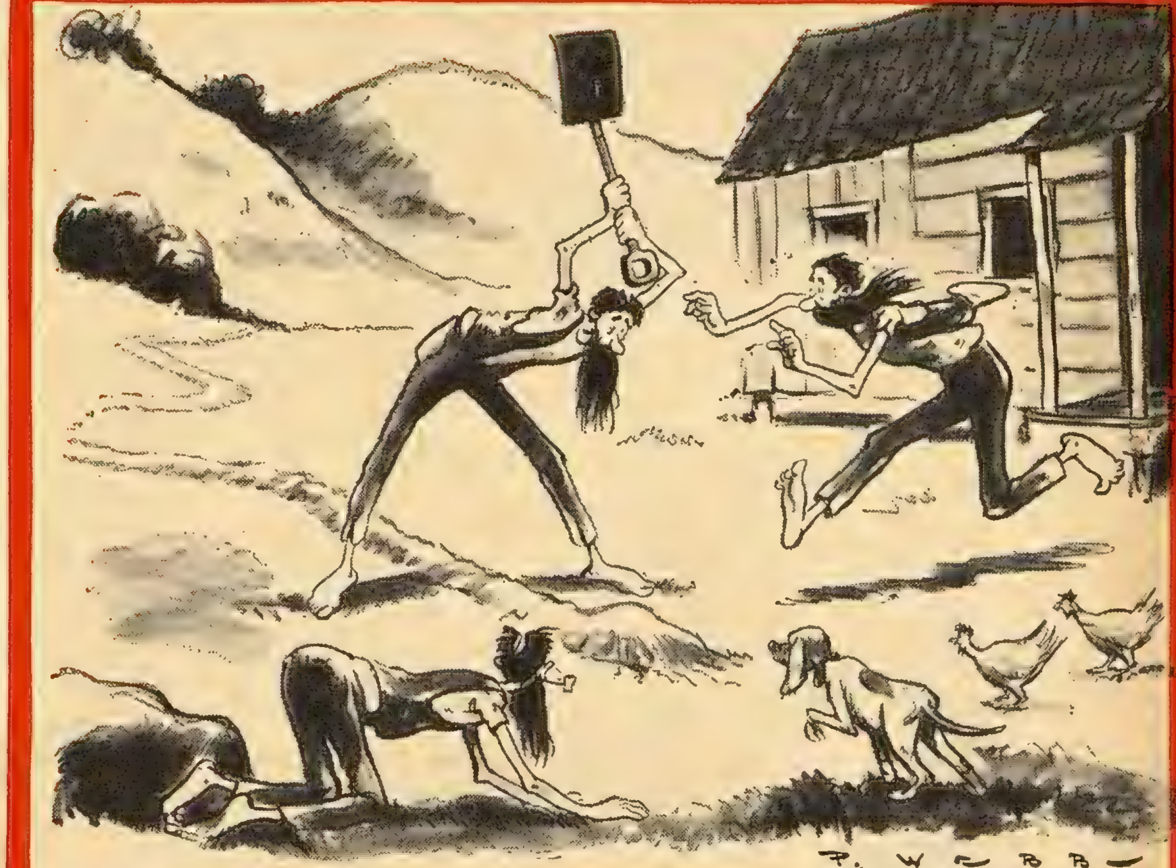

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JUAN BECOMES A BANKER

Continued from Page 37

brown cigarette papers, but he said he thought that would do. So with a stub of a pencil Pancho made out a quit-claim deed. As Juan rode off down the trail Pancho, his wife, and their seven children stood in the yard waving and calling, "The saints bless you!"

Por Dios, thought Juan, when had five hundred dollars ever bought so many people so much happiness?

He was still several miles from Mesquite Plains when he came to a fork in the trail. From the mountain country off to the left he saw a man loping toward him. He scowled and put his hand on his gun butt. If this was a *bandido*, he would be ready.

The rider did not look like a *bandido*. As he approached, Juan saw that he was short, fat, and jolly-looking. His clothes were those of a merchant and he wore a black derby hat.

"Say, friend," he called out, "can you tell me which road goes to Mesquite Plains?"

"This one," Juan answered. "I ride to Mesquite Plains and would enjoy the pleasure of your company. My name is Juan Ibáñez."

The fat man stuck out a chubby hand. "Black's the name. Glad to ride with you."

As they jogged along the trail, Mr. Black talked amiably about himself. He was a business man from Brooklyn come West to seek investment opportunities. Juan did not know where Brooklyn was, but guessed that it must be a country somewhere close to the United States, for the language Mr. Black spoke was very much like English.

"You are in business locally?" Mr. Black inquired politely.

"Si," Juan said. "I am with the banking business."

"That so?" Mr. Black's voice took on a note of interest. "Ever have any trouble with bank robbers?"

Juan laughed scornfully and patted his six-gun. "No *bandido* would dare try to rob Juan. With this I would fill him so full with holes his mother would not know him from a sieve."

Mr. Black gave Juan an appreciative slap on the back. "I'll bet you would!" Suddenly he lifted his arm. "Say, is that a bandit coming there?"

Juan turned quickly to look. The desert was empty. He was aware of a movement behind him, then props which held up the sky gave way and all the brittle blue dome collapsed upon him. . . .

JUAN did not know how long he was unconscious, but surely it was a very long time, for one could not have acquired so splitting a headache in a short while. With a groan, he opened his eyes. A man was standing over him. Juan reached for his gun but found the holster empty.

"Take it easy," Sheriff Hoss Perkins growled. "I'd hate to have to shoot you."

Juan sat up. Mr. Black was nowhere in sight. There was a smell of tequila in the air and he was surprised to find his shirt reeking with it. *Por Dios!* Had the sheriff *poured* it on him to revive him?

"What has happened?" he inquired weakly.

"That's what I want to know," Perkins snapped. "Alvarez told me he was afraid of funny business. Where's the money?"

"In the saddlebags."

The sheriff went over and looked in the saddlebags. There was nothing in them save an empty tequila bottle. He turned back to Juan. "What did you do with it?"

"I have been robbed!" Juan exclaimed. "By a little fat man with a derby hat."

"Haw! A likely story! How come you're so drunk, then?"

"I am not drunk."

"Thet shore ain't perfume I smell. Git up. I'm goin' to search you."

Indignantly Juan submitted to a search. The sheriff examined what he had found: a book of brown cigarette papers, a few silver coins, a sack of tobacco, and a small slip of paper. He gave all but the piece of paper back to Juan; this he studied carefully. Juan frowned. He did not remember that piece of paper in his pocket.

"H'mm," Perkins said. "Wal, I reckon this cinches it. Stick out yore paws."

"I—I do not understand," Juan protested.

The sheriff fastened the handcuffs on his wrists. "You're under arrest for embezzlement. Señor Alvarez said he suspected something when he saw you go into the saloon, so he come an' told me, an' I followed you. Reckon I got here too late to catch yore partner, but I shore got you."

"But I do not have the money."

"Course not. You had yore partner conk you on the noggin to make it look real. Thet's why you drunk so much tequila—so's you wouldn't feel it. C'mon, we're goin' back to Tres Rios."

Juan was confused. It was obvious

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

(Unabashed)

ROMEOW: A tomcat who hasn't found Julie yet.

ALMA-KNACK: Art of telling the weather a year ahead.

TAILORPHONE: Instrument for calling old sew-and-sew.

AFFIDAVID: Proof of who killed Goliath.

POKEY-O: Hirohito's hoosegow.

CATASTRO-FEE: Ambulance chaser's charge.

SCISSLORS: Hot shears.

SLOBBYIST: A fat guy outside the Senate door.

PORTFOOLYOU: A collection of uncommon stocks.

TANTALEYES: Rita Hey!worth's.

"—er, would you care to invest a ten spot to insure your daughter's having a good time?"

enough that Señor Black had hit him over the head and stolen the money, but Sheriff Perkins seemed to believe that Señor Black was his partner. As he started to mount Diablo, he noticed an ugly bruise on the horse's neck. Diablo was sullenly nosing at a black object on the ground. Juan's eyes lighted.

"Now you will see that I speak truth!" he exclaimed. "See, there is the *bandido's* hat. And here on Diablo's neck is a bruise. No doubt he fought with the *bandido* and was hit with a gun barrel."

Sheriff Perkins picked up the hat and squinted at it critically. It was badly torn and showed teeth marks. He grunted, "This don't cut no ice. Let's git movin'."

IN town, the sheriff locked Juan in a cell, then went for Señor Alvarez. When the bank owner came down the corridor, Juan saw that Rosita was with him. Her eyes were red from crying, but there was only scorn in them as she looked fiercely at him.

"Thief, dishonorable one! Never did I think you would do such a thing!"

"I swear by all the saints that I am innocent." Juan protested.

Señor Alvarez shook his head sadly. "I am truly sorry, Rosita. Because of you, I gave him a chance to amount to something. It hurts me deeply that he has turned out to be a dishonest one."

"Better to learn it now," Rosita answered, "than to wait until after I married him."

"But, Rosita—" Juan pleaded.

"I wonder what he did with the money?" Senor Alvarez interrupted, turning to Sheriff Perkins. "He must have had a confederate."

"Reckon this explains it," the sheriff said, handing the banker a piece of paper. "I found it in his pocket."

Señor Alvarez read aloud: " 'Under third rock east of Twisted Oak.' " He pursed his lips. "Why, Twisted Oak is that large tree where the trail crosses the creek."

"Right. And I'll bet my Sunday boots that's where his partner cached Juan's share of the loot."

"I do not have a partner."

"Tell you what," the sheriff said, ignoring Juan. "We'll take a sashay over to Twisted Oak an' see if the money's there. If it is, I reckon we'll have a case that'll send Juan to the pen for twenty years."

They turned and started to go. Juan called pleadingly to Rosita, "It is all a lie, my little potato. I did not do it!"

Rosita hesitated, then tossed her head and said, "I will ride with them to Twisted Oak. Perhaps you are telling the truth, perhaps not. If we find the money there—"

She did not finish the sentence, but as their footsteps faded off down the corridor Juan understood what she meant. If the money was found under the rock at Twisted Oak, he would be sent to prison, there to languish away and die.

With a morose sigh he sat down on the bunk and put his head in his hands. Somehow he had been made the victim of a very clever scheme. He had a feeling that Señor Alvarez was at the bottom of it, but why or how he did not know.

He had been brooding only a few moments when Sheriff Perkins' deputy, a stolid heavy-set man named Joe, appeared. "They's a gent out here to see you, Juan. Wanta talk to him?"

Juan shrugged. "It does not matter."

A brusque sharp-faced man came hurrying down the corridor and stopped in front of the cell. Juan saw that it was the land agent, Mr. Cuddy. "What do you want?" he asked dully.

"Did you buy a farm from a man named Pancho Treciado?" the man snapped.

"Si," Juan admitted. "I have the—"

"You have the deed with you?" Mr. Cuddy interrupted.

Juan fumbled in his pocket and found the sheaf of cigarette papers. Mr. Cuddy studied the scrawled-out deed with a frown. "H'mm. Irregular, highly irregular, but I suppose that is the way business is done along the border. How much do you want for this farm?"

Juan scratched his head. If Señor Alvarez discovered that he had bought a farm with five hundred dollars of the bank's money, that would probably mean another ten years in jail. But if Mr. Cuddy would give him five hundred dollars, he could return the money to the banker.

"Well," he said, "do you think that perhaps five—"

"Ridiculous! I won't pay a cent over two."

"But I need—"

"All right, I'll make it three. But three thousand dollars is positively my top figure."

"Three *thousand?"*

"Take it or leave it. Hurry up. I've got to catch the stage. Give me the quit-claim deed and sign this paper."

Weakly, Juan handed over the deed and signed the paper. Mr. Cuddy counted out sixty fifty-dollar bills. "Stage is comin'," the deputy called down the corridor.

"Pleasure to do business with you," Mr. Cuddy snapped, then turned and bolted.

Juan sat down on the edge of the bunk and blinked at the bills in his hands. He was rich. Being wealthy, he would not stay in jail long. *Por Dios!* Whoever heard of a rich man staying in jail! The thought eased his mind. Then he got to thinking upon the errand the sheriff, Señor Alvarez, and Rosita had gone on. He did not believe they would find any money at Twisted Oak. Still, the note had somehow got into his pocket. Suppose the money *was* there?

Another hour passed before they returned. Sheriff Perkins came clumping down the corridor with Señor Alvarez and Rosita close behind. Juan peered through the bars. The sheriff was carrying a briefcase. "Wal," he declared, "reckon this cinches it. Found it right where it was supposed to be—with two thousand bucks inside."

"It is not possible!" Juan breathed, looking imploringly at Rosita.

"I saw it," she snapped. "You are a thief. Do not speak to me again."

"The thing I do not understand," Señor Alvarez said, "is why there is two thou-

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sand rather than twenty-five hundred dollars. That is not a fifty-fifty split."

"What makes you think they were goin to split fifty-fifty?" Sheriff Perkins aske sharply.

Señor Alvarez whitened, then shrugge "I was just guessing, of course."

"I spent the other five hundred dollars, Juan confessed. "I bought a farm."

"Haw!" Perkins roared. "He's a liar a well as a thief."

"And if you will let me out of jail," Jua went on doggedly, "I will pay back th three thousand which has been lost."

"How?" Señor Alvarez asked scornfully

"Out of my own pocket I will pay it.

Sheriff Perkins chuckled. "He shore ha got a sense of humor. I searched him an he didn't have more'n a dollar on him. The sheriff turned away. "Reckon everything's settled. After supper I'll write ou a confession an' have him sign it."

THEY turned and left. With a sigh Juan moved across the cell and stoo gazing out the narrow window. No on believed him. He was a criminal. They would send him away to the penitentiary for life. Rosita would probably marry Señor Alvarez. He wondered if they woul send Diablo to prison with him.

As he stood unhappily gazing out th window, he saw a man riding down th street. The man was short, fat, and jolly-looking. His heart suddenly beat fast.

Turning from the window, he called "Señor Perkins! It is him—the *bandid* who robbed me!"

There was no answer. Again and agai Juan called, but raised only echoes. With bitterness, he realized that it was useless Sheriff Perkins and Joe had gone to supper. By the time they got back it would b too late to catch Mr. Black.

Suddenly there was a commotion outside. Peering through the window, he saw that Mr. Black's horse was rearing up in fright. Diablo, who had broken loose from the hitch rail, was moving threateningly toward it. With a wicked leer, he approached Mr. Black, stalking him as a mountain lion stalks a rabbit. Mr. Black lashed out with his quirt. Diablo seized the quirt in his mouth and wrenched it away. Mr. Black reached under his coat and withdrew a glittering object.

"Look out, Diablo!" Juan warned.

Mr. Black never got a chance to shoot. Diablo's head lashed out and his teeth snapped at the fat man's leg. Missing, they scraped his horse's flank, and with a snort of fear the animal tossed Mr. Black off and went bolting down the street. For a moment Diablo stood squinting down at the fat man, who lay helpless on his back; then, as if not quite sure what to do with him, Diablo put a heavy foot on Mr. Black's stomach and pinned him down.

The noise of the battle had attracted a crowd. Señor Alvarez came rushing up. "Get him off me!" Mr. Black gasped. "Tell him I didn't mean to hurt him."

Señor Alvarez approached Diablo gingerly. Diablo turned and leered at him, giving a derisive nicker.

Sheriff Hoss Perkins pushed his way through the crowd.

"Diablo has gone crazy," Señor Alvarez declared. "I demand that you shoot him."

"He has captured the *bandido!*" Juan shouted through the window. "That is the man who robbed me!"

"It's a lie!" Mr. Black gasped.

"Of course it is," Señor Alvarez cut in. "This man is my friend. He is a business man from Brooklyn."

Mr. Black made the mistake of trying to move. To hold him down, Diablo put a little more weight on the foot resting on his stomach. Face turning purple, Mr. Black gasped, "I did not mean to hit you

POST-WAR PROMISES!

Radio promises Radar and Television in the postwar period.

CROWN Luggage promises lighter, more streamlined and stronger luggage.

Include CROWN luggage in your postwar travel plans.

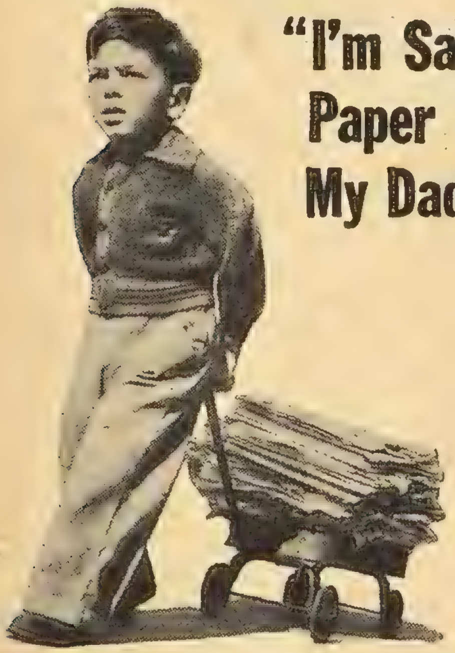
The Traveler's Mark of Distinction

CROWN LUGGAGE CO.

409-421 W. Redwood St., Balto. 1, Md.
230 Fifth Avenue New York, N. Y.

BUY MORE WAR BONDS THAN BEFORE!

"I'm Saving Paper for My Daddy"



Millions of fathers and sons in uniform today depend on the paper required to make or wrap over 700,000 vital war items.

Paper is still a No. 1 war material shortage. Last year's collection of 7,000,000 tons wasn't enough. 8,000,000 tons must be collected this year to meet the essential needs of the battlefront and homefront.

So please save every scrap!

And remember, your paper now has a chance to serve *twice*. In some localities, funds from the sale of waste paper are being devoted more and more to buying little extras for wounded veterans. Or the money can go to other worthy community projects.

DOUBLE V PROGRAM
SAVE WASTE PAPER
V TO SPEED VICTORY
V TO AID VETERANS
OR LOCAL PROJECTS

This advertisement prepared by the War Advertising Council in cooperation with the War Production Board and the Office of War Information.

so hard! If you had not tried to bite me and take the bottle away from me—"

No wonder Diablo was angry. Mr. Black had not even given him a drink; he had poured all the tequila on Juan's shirt.

Sheriff Perkins looked from Mr. Black to Señor Alvarez. "Call off your nag, Juan," he ordered. "There's somethin' fishy here."

Juan whistled and Diablo reluctantly removed his foot. Someone had caught Mr. Black's horse and brought it back. Sheriff Perkins went over and searched the saddlebags. In them he found twenty-five hundred dollars in new one-hundred-dollar bills. Sending his deputy after the black derby hat found at the scene of the crime, he tried it on Mr. Black. It fitted perfectly. Grimly the sheriff turned to Señor Alvarez. "You say this gent is a friend of yourn?"

Señor Alvarez was very pale. "I—I never saw him before in my life."

"That's a lie!" Mr. Black exclaimed.

"Fool!" Señor Alvarez hissed.

"Shut up!" Sheriff Perkins snapped. "Now, mister, start talkin'."

"It was all a frame-up," Mr. Black said nervously. "Alvarez wanted Juan's girl, so he gave him a job in the bank and had him carry the money to Mesquite Plains. I was supposed to rob him and make it look like he was my partner. Then Juan would be sent to prison and Alvarez would have a clear field with the girl. I put the note in Juan's pocket and planted the money under the rock so you would find it. The whole scheme was made up by Alvarez. I just did what I was told."

Sheriff Perkins gave Señor Alvarez a disgusted look. "So that's the kind of skunk you are. Wal, c'm'on, you an' yore partner are goin' to jail."

"You cannot arrest me!" Señor Alvarez declared. "I have done nothing. What will you charge me with?"

The sheriff prodded the banker with the barrel of his six-gun and grunted, "Dunno. But I'll think of somethin'."

THEY sat on the bench under the mesquite tree in front of Rosita's *casa* and watched the orange moon rise over the rim of the desert. It was very beautiful, Juan thought. Rosita snuggled close to him. "Juanito mio, I am sorry I misjudged you. I should have known."

"It is nothing," Juan said absently.

Rosita smiled and kissed him.

Juan kept staring at the moon, puzzling over a very deep problem. How much of the three thousand dollars in his pocket was rightfully his?

"Are you worried about something, my little Juan?" Rosita asked.

He sighed. *"Si.* I have money troubles."

"Tell me. Perhaps I can help."

"Pues. It is like this: Señor Alvarez gave me five thousand dollars to take to the bank; I spent five hundred of it for a farm; Sheriff Perkins found two thousand dollars in the briefcase; he found twenty-five hundred more dollars in Mr. Black's saddlebags; I sold the farm for three thousand dollars. Now tell me this: Who owes who for what and how much?"

Rosita was silent, then she said, "You have the money with you, my sweet?"

"Si."

"Let me see it. Perhaps you have not counted it right."

Juan gave her the money. She counted it, smiled, then put the roll of bills in the bosom of her gown. "I will straighten everything out for you. It is not good that you should worry your head over money."

Juan sighed. He should have known better than to give her the money to count. He wondered if he could persuade her to give him back just one little fifty-dollar bill to worry over.

THE END

ORDER BY MAIL FROM HOLLYWOOD

ADELE MARA
In
"Bells of Rosita"
A Republic Picture

hollywood flattery for you!

$10.98
plus postage

BETTY CO-ED'S

"Stroller"

SLACK SUIT

A two-tone, two-piece slack suit with wonderfully slim lines! Smart jacket is bloused for easy fit, with nipped-in waistband, two clever "envelope" pockets and tricky buckle. Slacks are beautifully draped, with deep pleats. Tailored from a luxurious, long-wearing all-season rayon fabric; "Tebilized" to resist creases! **Brown, Navy, Black, Red, Green,** and **Cadet Blue,** with color contrast in jacket. Sizes 10 to 20. **$10.98,** plus postage.

SEND NO MONEY—WE MAIL C. O. D.
Or save C. O. D. charges and speed delivery by enclosing cashier's check or money order for $11.23, which includes postage and handling.

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE!
PROMPT DELIVERY
BETTY CO-ED OF HOLLYWOOD
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NOW AVAILABLE! BETTY CO-ED COSMETICS! ASK YOUR DEALER!

BETTY CO-ED OF HOLLYWOOD, Dept. 942
6253 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood 28, Calif.
Please send **"Stroller" Slack Suit** at **$10.98,** plus postage.
(Californians, add 2½% State Sales Tax)
Brown ☐ **Navy** ☐ **Black** ☐ **Cadet Blue** ☐ **Red** ☐ **Green** ☐
(Mark 1st and 2nd color choice)
Size: 10 12 14 16 18 20 (Circle size wanted)
(Please *print* name and address plainly)
Name______________________________
Street______________________________
City________________Zone____State________

Make the most of Spring Fashions . . .

START WITH YOUR *Hair* MAKE-UP

The effect of your new Spring hat depends upon your hair . . . kept lovely and manageable by simple, daily care. To help you achieve an exciting new radiance, Ogilvie Sisters have created specialized preparations for your individual needs . . . the very same world-famous preparations used in their Fifth Avenue salon. *Start using them today!*

Creme-Set
MAKE-UP FOR THE HAIR
Ogilvie Sisters
NEW YORK
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CREME-SET
"Magic Make-up for the Hair!" Imparts a glowing sheen to dry, brittle permanent-wave ends. $1.25

JUMBO HAIR PENCIL
Moisten the tip, touch up those grey wisps—and you've an alluringly youthful coiffure. Choose from six natural shades. $1.00

DRY SHAMPOO
The hair cleansing powder that needs no mitt. 45 quick-as-a-bunny shampoos in handy, sifter-top box. $1.00

COMMUNIQUE—A delightful new hair fragrance . . . haunting as a memory . . . refreshing as an April shower. The finishing touch to your hair-do. $1.25

Prices subject to Federal Retail Tax

Free! "Do Something Lovely For Your Hair" is a booklet you'll welcome, for it points the way to the *proper* care of your hair. Send for your copy. Dep't. L-4, Ogilvie Sisters, 604 Fifth Ave. New York 19, N. Y.

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NEW YORK • WASHINGTON • TORONTO

Hair Preparations at Better Salons, Department and Drug Stores . . . Everywhere

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Hat by Sally Victor

Woman-Talk

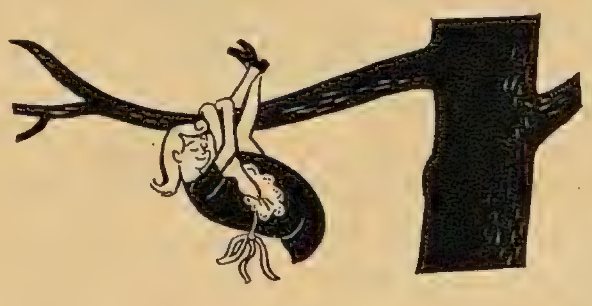
BY MARGARET FISHBACK

AH, YOUTH, YOUTH! — Here's what happened to my friend who was persuaded by her five-year-old son's progressive school psychologist to resign her advertising job so that she could stay home and give the boy that much-touted sense of security which only a mother can impart. After less than two months of being a mother, she was called back to the school, where the authorities broke the news to her that Sonny was to be *expelled* because he was "overstimulated" and his "span of interest" was so short he had a bad effect on his classmates. "What you intellectual parents do to your children!" moaned the child psychologist reproachfully. "And what you child psychologists do to us parents!" moaned my pal. But even when she reminded him that he had talked her out of a good job, he didn't retreat from his position. He went even further: He suggested that the best solution would be to employ a full-time psychologist to come and live with the problem family. When he was reminded again that now Momma had no job, thanks to his advice, and that psychologists come high, especially privately, he remained adamant. Since then, the problem mother and the problem child have been having a fine time at home and in the park. She has about decided never to send him to school unless the school provides a psychologist to psychoanalyze its psychologist.

WHAT THE WELL-DRESSED WOMAN WON'T WEAR: Women's panties have been omitted from a War Production Board order listing various popular-priced "essential" items of clothing. Designed to increase the supply of such "essentials," the order includes girdles, brassières, men's shorts, and diapers.

TRAGIC ACCIDENTS: Beware teething necklaces and pillows if you are going to leave Baby alone in her play pen or perambulator while you finish washing the dishes. A national study made recently by Dr. Harold Abramson of New York City indicated that mechanical strangulation is a leading cause of death in early infancy.

INFLUENTIAL FASHIONS: Probably the largest fashion show of all time was put on at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City for the benefit of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Among the countless concoctions destined to influence fashions for months to come was a filmy brown dinner dress worn by Mrs. Stanley Mortimer, Jr., "best-dressed woman of 1944." Designed by Hattie Carnegie, it would flatter a woman far less chic than the willowy Mrs. M. But there were many outfits too extreme for the average figure. These were modeled by famous fashion mannequins, including fifteen Conover "Cover Girls" whose faces have become familiar to the populace via national magazines. Take, for example, the bathing suit made of a fabric spotted to simulate leopard skin. *You* take it, *I* wouldn't risk the suit or the tiger lilies, either, that adorned the model's hair. Nor did I hanker for the bathing suits whose pants were draped diaper fashion, even though this misguided whimsey appeared last summer too, and should have prepared us for further developments. Stage and screen celebrities were out in force—Mary Martin, Martha Scott, Mary Astor, and Gypsy Rose Lee—some of them in wonderful, wearable clothes. Mary Astor's suit by Milgrim was simple and tailored enough for a business girl (if she could afford it). And pert Gypsy Rose Lee's green dinner gown by Charles James would do things, in a nice way, for a figure far inferior to Miss Lee's. Starlet Mary Howard, however, took her bow in a printed summer frock that no one but a movie star would wear. Designed by Herman Patrick Tappé, it sported the spots of a Dalmatian dog on a white background, and to point it all up, Miss Howard struggled in with a huge Dalmatian, who looked like the twin brother of Smoky, who resides with New York Fire Engine Company Number 21. The dog disapproved wholly of the Grand Ballroom, the runway, the fashion show, and Miss Howard, who finally gave up the struggle and yielded the leash to Commentator Louis Calhern, while she paraded down the runway in solitary splendor.



NATURE LOVER

Work and worry! I hate both.
I would emulate the sloth,
Happy in a life of ease,
Hanging upside down in trees.

THERE'S SAFETY IN COLOR: Women workers wondered why machine tools had to be drab gray. The Hasco Machinery Company of Newark, New Jersey, said, "Why, indeed?" Color was tried, and it works! According to Manager S. H. Berger it reduces eyestrain, fatigue, and absenteeism. Best of all, the orange reserved for danger spots has increased safety in the shop. The other colors used are green and cream.

LILTING LOVELINESS
FLORAL FRESHNESS

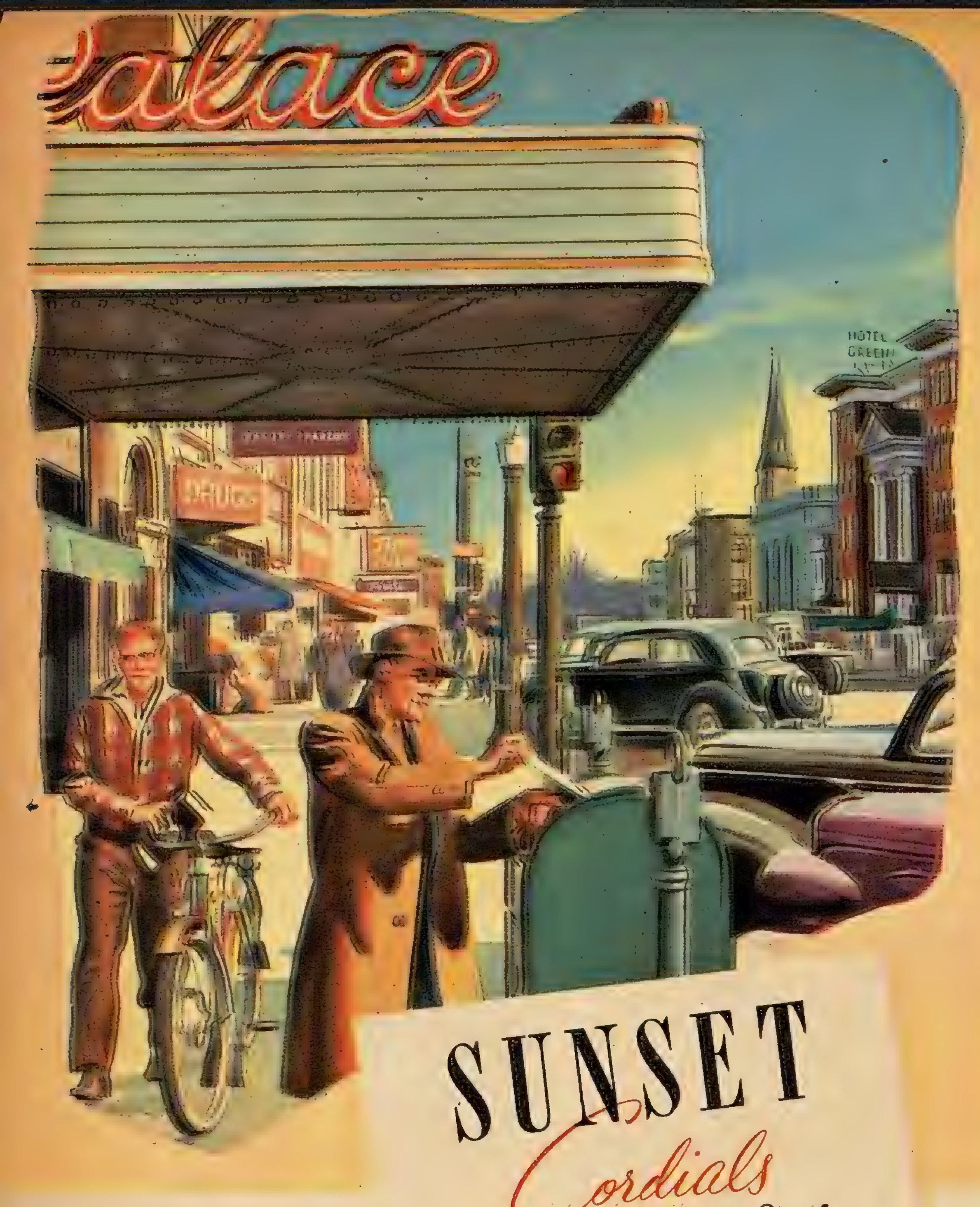
Rain-washed petals of a rose — fresh and fragrant after your shower and over-all dusting with a LeSonier Powder Mitt. The Mother's Day gift de luxe.

AT GOOD STORES EVERYWHERE

LeSonier

U. S. Pat. No. 2233686
REFILLABLE POWDER MITT

LE SONIER, Inc. New York — Boston



Sunset
Apricot Liqueur
Sunset
Orange Flavored Gin

SUNSET
Cordials
AMERICA'S FINEST SINCE 1894

AS AMERICAN *AS* MAIN STREET

Family cars parked in tight rows. The "Opera House" and "Doc" Watson's. Gay crowds swapping gossip. You're on Main Street—the highway through America's heart.

Genuinely American as this scene are Sunset Cordials. For the fruits Sunset's master-blenders wed so skillfully to native spirits come from orchards where Main Street becomes Route 1. Try Sunset Cordials. You'll enjoy their down-to-earth goodness.

SUNSET INCORPORATED, CHICAGO, ILL.
Apricot Liqueur—60 PROOF • Rock and Rye—60 PROOF
Orange Flavored Gin—70 PROOF • Blackberry Flavored Brandy—70 PROOF

HO-HUM IN HAWAII

Continued from Page 31

a morning of wrestling with a Honolulu phone, have been known to sit on the floor and quietly bite the legs of tables and chairs. To call a Honolulu number from Pearl Harbor it is necessary to ask for an outside line, and then to dial 9. This is supposed to result in a clear humming sound, indicating that the line is open and the caller at liberty to dial his number. But instead of the hum, there comes an ear-assaulting rasp which tells you the line is fouled. The only recourse is to keep hanging up and redialing the 9, a process which is complicated by an almost invariable loss of your outside line.

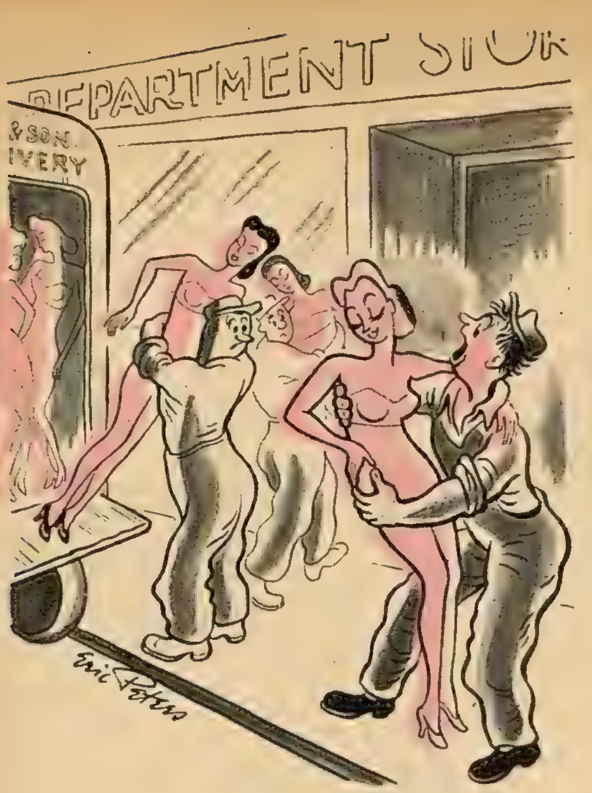
If, finally, the dialer is lucky enough to stab his 9 and get the go-ahead signal, he will almost always receive a different kind of high-pitched burp in his eardrum as each cipher of the number is spun on the dial. Nobody knows what this means, except that you aren't going to get your number.

I have spent as many as three days trying to bridge by telephone the twelve miles that separate Pearl Harbor from Honolulu, and the closest I came to success was to have the proprietor of the Kewalo Inn, whom I was *not* calling, inform me snappishly that there were positively no more reservations available that night. This was a poor substitute for a short talk with an officer in the sub-public-relations office on Bishop Street.

THE laundry situation on Oahu is also very sinister. Because the island is infested with admirals and generals, much attention is paid to creased pants, furbished shoes, etc. This demands more expert laundering than the average man can do with his own hands, and the public washers of soiled linen in Honolulu are a very fickle group. You may get your laundry back in four days. You may get it back in four months, or you may never get it. Sometimes the laundries won't take it, and sometimes they take it and airily dismiss it. It is very disconcerting to be down to your last skivvy and then to have the laundryman blithely disclaim any knowledge of the bundle you entrusted to him four weeks ago. Eventually one is apt to acquire the nervous apprehension that a ground crew feels for the flying personnel of a bomber which is taking off on a particularly hazardous strike: only the ultimate in luck, you feel, will bring your baby back to you.

As for dry-cleaning: If anyone should blunder across one khaki suit, gabardine ($65), and one khaki suit, tropical worsted ($55), a swift message to the writer would be greatly appreciated. Don't phone; come in person.

Transportation, too, is highly unorthodox. The horrors of stateside transit may be great, but I will bet that you never had a Kanaka driver stop his bus in front of a hot-dog stand, munch two sandwiches and drink two bottles of pop, smoke a cigarette and swap lies with the proprietor, then climb back aboard his overstuffed vehicle with no explanation other than a lusty belch. I know there are seats on Honolulu buses, because I see people sitting on them, but I have never seen one unoccupied. And unless you own a car or have one assigned to you, you are practically forced to ride the buses. Taxi drivers are temperamental souls who rarely wish to travel in your direction, and if they can be persuaded, an approximate fifty-cents-a-mile rate discourages frequent patronage. For the average man at Pearl or Hickam or Shafter, a pilgrimage to town is a waste



"Somebody slipped in a *live* one!"

of time, since by the time he gets to town, it is time to turn around and come back or be caught by the curfew.

I am told that it used to entail a matter of fifteen years' residence in the islands before a man achieved the status of a *kamaaina* and was entitled to wear a feather lei in lieu of a hatband. Now, however, *kamaaina* has been corrupted by service personnel to mean just about anybody who lived in Hawaii before the war.

Kamaainas, especially the ones who came out from the United States, are very proud of their status. They glory in speaking Hawaiian instead of English, which is very fine when one is addressing Hawaiians (except that most of the Hawaiians I know can't speak their own language), but it is entirely useless as a means of communicating with somebody born and raised in Montana or Mississippi. You ask a strange civilian how to get from here to there, and he throws *mauka* and *makai* at you until you are dizzy. One means "toward the mountains" and the other means "toward the sea," but I have never been able to unscramble them. A roomful of *kamaainas,* all of whom grew up in some place like Fresno, California, or Charles Town, West Virginia, can make more noise than a flock of myna birds, and it is just as unintelligible. About the only time they knock off the painfully acquired Hawaiian is when they are telling some hemmed-in dogface what a wonderful place Oahu was before the Army, Navy, and Marines came out and loused it up.

I MAY tend to place too much emphasis on the matter, but as far as I can make out, the voluntary exiles hold each individual serviceman responsible for the curfew, the high prices, the shortages of everything from *okolehau* to beach cottages and the rips in the laundry. After listening to one sweet-faced white-haired lady say she "certainly hoped the war would end soon, so you people will go home and leave us in peace on our lovely island," I have a sneaking suspicion that they feel that the Jap raid on the Harbor was engineered personally by me, as an excuse to wangle free transportation to the Pearl of the Pacific. I am willing to take the blame for starting the Pacific war, but the housing shortage is something I didn't bring about all by myself. Honest.

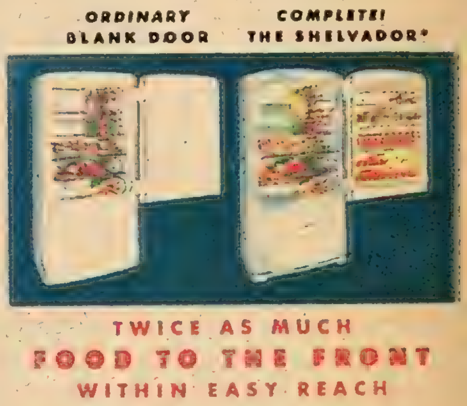
From the G. I.'s view, Honolulu is a place where the bars close at 3.30 or 4

Guest: The worst of this food situation is that when I have a chance to stock up on perishable foods I lack the space to store them. Do *you* have that trouble, Mrs. White?
Mrs. White: No, I don't, really. Come with me and I'll show you why.

Mrs. White: You see? This Crosley Shelvador* is the secret of my extra storage space.
Guest: Why, Mrs. White—*my* refrigerator is as big as that but it's always jam-packed full.

Mrs. White: Yes, but you see the foods stored in the Shelvador* release lots of space in the main food compartment of the Crosley.
Guest: Truly wonderful! No wonder you can buy in quantity. I must tell John about the Crosley Shelvador* — *that's* the one I want.

YOU'LL BE GLAD you waited for *YOUR* Crosley Refrigerator with the Shelvador*. Just as soon as American lives are safe again, we'll build you a refrigerator with every major improvement and development in home refrigeration—PLUS the patented, exclusive SHELVADOR*! No other refrigerator has the door that gives you twice as much food to the front — within easy reach.



JUST REMEMBER the Crosley Refrigerator will give you everything important, PLUS the SHELVADOR*. No refrigerator is complete without it — none but Crosley has it! The Crosley Corporation, Cincinnati, Ohio.

* *Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.*

CROSLEY

Radios: Radio-Phonographs: FM: Television: Short Wave: Electronics: Radar: Refrigerators: Household Appliances: the Crosley Car: Home of WLW, *"the Nation's Station"*

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CUMBERLAND
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CHARLESTON
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LINKING 13 GREAT STATES WITH THE NATION
B&O

The Link Between

YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBORS FROM COAST TO COAST!

Today, America is one great neighborhood! We no longer speak of distance in hundreds of miles—but in hours. Food from 'cross-continent is part of our daily meals. But, have you ever considered how all this is possible?

Serving nearly every community in this country, America's vast railroad network—"The Link Between"—is relied on by virtually all Americans.

Over the steel rails, farmers send their crops to market . . . coal reaches your fuel dealer . . . letters race great distances to your mail-box. Directly, or indirectly, America's railroads serve everyone in this vast neighborhood-nation!

Linking 13 great states with the nation, the 11,000 miles of Baltimore & Ohio track serve millions of people throughout the "Heart of Industrial America." So that you, who depend on *our* "link," may enjoy America's full benefits, the B&O strives to give the finest in rail service . . . modern transportation, paced by progress!

R. B. WHITE, *President*

BALTIMORE & OHIO RAILROAD

P. M., which is about an hour before you can get to town. It's a place where two thousand bucks' worth of wood and plaster is listed for sale as a house worth $27,000. It's a town where you can't go to a night spot for dinner and a little music unless you've got a *wahine* hanging on your arm; where a hamburger costs you a quarter, and a sandwich and a glass of milk are apt to hit fifty cents. It's a place where the newspapers assay 50 per cent Hawaiian slang and 50 per cent English; where political rallies consist of hip-shaking hula girls and ukulele music; where the civilians have a more highly developed sense of civic superiority than a Florida chamber-of-commerce press agent; and where the slums are enough to gag a goat. The much publicized Waikiki beach is a bath-mat-sized strip of dirty sand resembling Coney Island on a hot Sunday, and the blue Pacific a snare which is full of coral to cut you, fungus to get in your ears, and seagoing slabs made up of orange peel, newspapers, and scraps of box lunches.

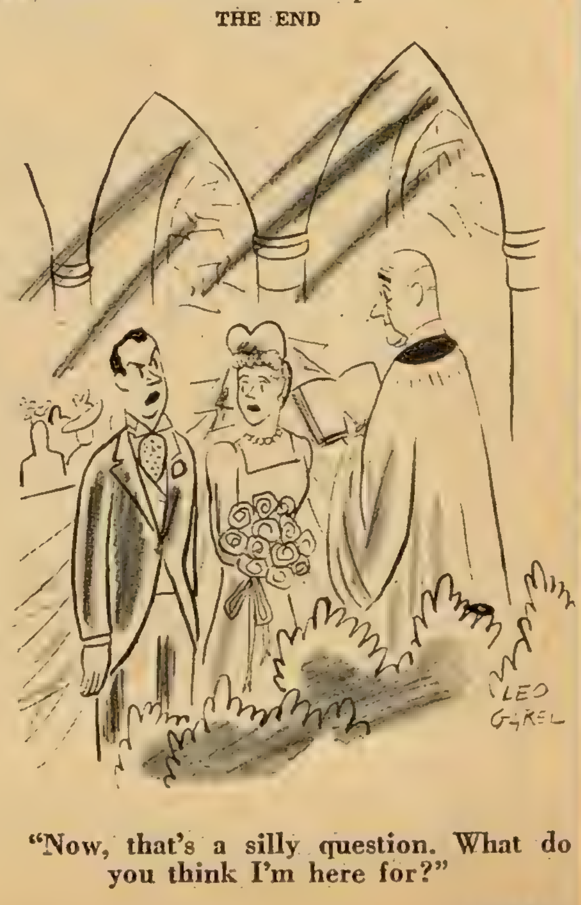
The worst feature is the work. A war-proud carrier rides into the harbor, or a submarine comes in to give its bearded crew a breather. Communiqués flutter like ticker tape on a New York parade day, and the gay warriors who fly planes and ride destroyers continually pass before your eyes. Intimate information on the war crowds your head, and you—you must sit behind a desk and play with papers and fumble with paper clips and fight telephones. It is true that somebody must do the office work for the war, but it seems unkind to locate so much of it in Hawaii.

ONE day, a few months ago, a big fat Hollywoodish rainbow curved down out of the Technicolor sky, and its end vanished into the midships section of an LST moored on the bichloride blue of Pearl Harbor. From the slopes of Nakalapa, an extinct volcano overlooking the harbor, it was something out of a cheap calendar, with the blue backdrop of mountains and the lush cane crowding the color scheme.

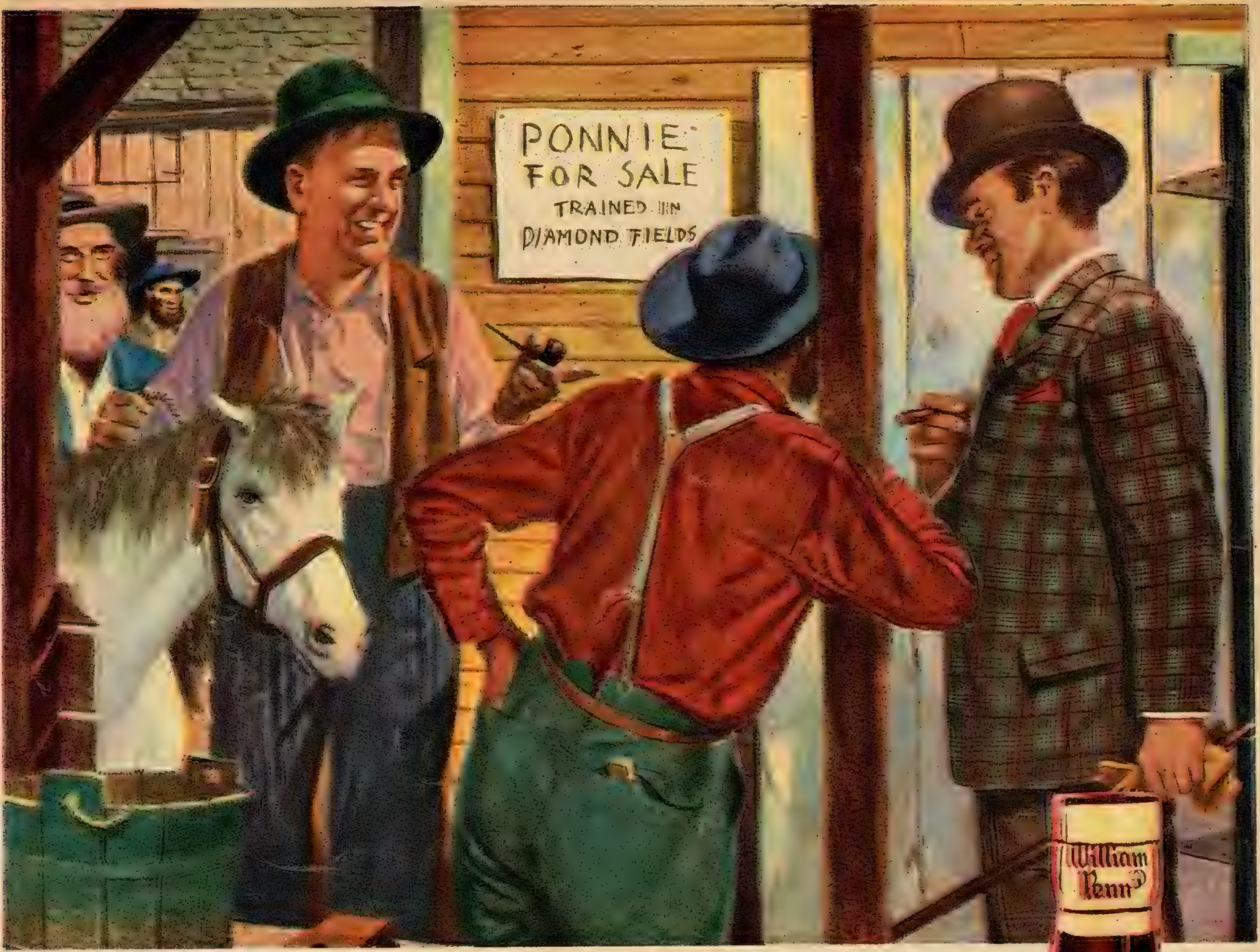
"And rainbows," a friend of mine remarked irritably, when I called the tableau to his attention, "are just like everything else on this damned rock—beautiful, but you can't use 'em."

That is Oahu, the Paradise of Pacific. But the main thing is that it's 2,000 miles too far from San Francisco, and about 4,000 miles too far from Japan.

THE END



"Now, that's a silly question. What do you think I'm here for?"


PONNIE
FOR SALE
TRAINED IN
DIAMOND FIELDS

"YOU KNOW, BARNEY, a smart trader could make a fortune in these diamond fields if he knew just where to find the smaller mining camps." ● ● ● How Barney Barnato found a way to apply "horse sense" to his friend's remark is one of many enjoyable stories about gems. ● ● ● Enjoyable, too, is the wonderful mellowness of William Penn Blended Whiskey, the *Gem of the Blends!*

They laughed at Barney and his "Ponnie"...

"A CIGAR SALESMAN? Ho! Ho! What can he know about diamonds?" The Dutch burghers of South Africa's diamond fields roared with laughter when Barney Barnato bought an old trader's "ponnie" and announced he was in the diamond business. ● ● ● But the pony, trained by its former master to find its own way to the best diamond locations, provided the experience which Barney lacked. Soon, Barnato became an outstanding success in the world of gems. ● ● ● Another outstanding success among gems is William Penn Blended Whiskey, the GEM OF THE BLENDS! *Wonderful mellowness, fine fragrance, unsurpassed richness of flavor make it a premium whiskey.* And yet, it sells at a non-premium price. That's why millions say "When" with William Penn!

GOODERHAM & WORTS LIMITED, PEORIA, ILLINOIS

William Penn

GEM OF THE BLENDS

William Penn
ORIGINATED IN 1896
William Penn
Blended Whiskey
BLENDED AND BOTTLED FOR
GOODERHAM & WORTS LIMITED PEORIA ILL.

BLENDED WHISKEY—86 PROOF—65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS

Quality that never varies
Red Cap
CARLING'S Red Cap ALE
Hireham

Painted more than three centuries ago, Rembrandt's *Man in Armor* is still a cherished example of dramatic perfection in the art of portraiture

Since 1840 **CARLING'S** Red Cap **ALE**

Brewing Corporation of America • Cleveland, Ohio

BRAINS vs. BRONSKI

Continued from Page 33

to marry me, fat as she is, an' I tal her, 'Sure, h'O. K., forst time I marry two hondred pounds of you, second time two hondred more, then I am put in chail for marry two womans!'" His laugh boomed in the rafters.

I was trying to remember why I was laughing so hard I ached in the jaws, when someone touched me on the shoulder. I looked up and there was the Bronk.

"Please, Alex, couldt I haff fife, maybe fifteen dollars?"

"So you got weeded out," I said sourly.

He stood there in a sort of humble-footed way, a sheepish grin stumbling over his face.

"Fife handts I lasted," he said proudly.

I growled in my throat. "Five hands, fifteen dollars! Steve's bleeders is gettin' soft."

Well, I frisked his roll from my pocket and gave him a couple of bills.

I don't know how much later it was when the Bronk jogged me a second time. The evening was getting along. Anyway, when the Bronk came around the second time I gave him his whole roll.

It must have been around midnight when the Bronk came back for the third and last time. He'd been sharped, bled, and otherwise gizzled of his earnings. This time it was *my* money that turned pale.

I felt like I'd been kicked by a hundred-proof mule. So what went on at this point I've never been able to swear to, but I've had the story played back to me so often by Jan Kopec that I have a fair idea of how it actually happened.

"Please, Alex,"—and I don't suppose the Bronk was ever more fuddled or trusting than when he stood there at my elbow—"couldt you let me haff . . . saveral dollars? I pay you back somptime."

I looked at him with muzzy eyes while he stood on first one foot and then the other.

"Maybe twanty-fife, t'irty?" I could barely see his stumbling hands helping out his voice. "Last handt I almos' win."

Well, they tell me I wouldn't even *talk* little money. They tell me the bottle talked for me, big and loud with a sozzled tongue. Every so often I get a picture of Jan Kopec, looking at me from across the table while he heaved laughter from under his ribs.

Anyway, I wish I'd seen the Bronk's face when I passed him my roll.

WHEN I began to come to about an hour later, Steve's was going strong. In the babble of smoke-filled air every coal loader there was loading—in a loud voice—twice as much coal as he loaded in the mines, and every cutter was cutting—ton by ton at the top of his lungs—more coal than the loaders could load in a month. Over this, the accordions squawked out of tune, sagging out the songs of the old country, and the pinball machines racketed back at the noise.

I came out of it a little at a time. My head rang like a cylinder that someone was playing on with a hammer.

I reached out for my bottle and found it empty. Thinking a little antidote at this time wouldn't do me any harm, I fumbled through my pockets for the price of Steve's blister water. My hand was a long time reaching bottom. I pulled it out and shoved in again.

"I been hijacked!"

I was sobering up fast. I rammed through all my pockets again and turned the linings out and dusted through the creases. I reared up on my two legs and overturned the table.

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"Where's the bunco that cleaned me?" I bawled. "Where's the filchin' so-and-so?"

It took Jan Kopec and Joe Kick—the two of them—to hold me.

"Wait'll I get 'im!" I bellowed. "Leave me lay hands on 'im!"

Jan Kopec tried to tell me something, but I kept yelling I'd been robbed. Somebody had put knockout drops in my bottle. This was a clip joint I personally, alone and singlehanded, was going to trim down to kindling wood!

The Bronk must have heard the commotion. Like a bear charging upright, he lunged in my direction and closed in, putting up his outsized dukes.

"W'at you do to Alex?" he shouted, screening me with his big bulk. "Who's mak' Alex madt? Come out an' fight me! Nobody's hort Alex wit' me here!"

At this, Jan Kopec released my scruff and doubled up with laughter. I saw Mike Federoff, beyond the fringe of tension, circling for the kill, and Steve Pop scurried for a counter.

THEN Jan Kopec told me.

"You're beeg shot, my fran. You're give your money to Bronski for card game. You're tal him— Look at your face! My fran—you die?"

No little runt with nothing but brains likes to sell himself for a sucker.

I roared. "I'll show them sharpers! So they used Bronski as a go-between? Leave me at 'em!"

Head down, fists windmilling, I made for the card game. Floyd Ult saw me coming and sat holding his cards at the table, blinking his white-lashed lids. "Please God" Perkins scuttled to his feet.

"Please God," he said piously, "I played 'em like I seen 'em."

I let him have it. It was a blow heard round Outcrop, for like a lot of homebrew bottled too early, the men blew their tops and the day shift lined up behind me and began popping at the night shift.

Chairs still warm from being sat on and tables dripping five-buck moisture crashed from one wall to the other. A window shattered behind me. A big body hurtled past me and collided with a pinball machine.

From the looks of things Steve was going out of business fast. From behind his counter he dodged flying bottles.

"Falla peoples, don't bustin' mine joint, don't bustin' mine lifework, I ain't gotten hinsurins, safe just mine tables, savin' mine chairs, don't brink down the cops. Mike, Mike, savin' mine joint!"

I looked around in a hurry for Mike Federoff and saw him at the fringe of the brawl, working in. Was I imagining it, or was he hewing a course directly toward me?

He was built like a bull—all shoulders, no neck, a stocky force of bone-crushing beef. I saw him give Anton Hovac a broadside clout, and Anton went down like a tired tree. If Mike was red-rimmed around the eyes when I'd kissed Josie, it was nothing to his eyes now, and now he was dynamiting a course directly toward me. I let out a yowl for the Bronk and found him right alongside.

"Listen," I panted. "Here comes Mike Federoff. Think we can take him?"

The Bronk nursed big knuckles he'd just used on the granite jaw of Matt Noshagya. "Don't you worry nottink wit' me here."

For a moment, close beside the Bronk, I shadowboxed with great skill.

Then, after bouncing Pete Kopsac off his fist and slamming down Yasha Jablonski by the impact of his forward drive, Mike Federoff made for me on his short charging legs. "Bronk," I said, "Bronski—"

He squared around and met Mike Federoff head on.

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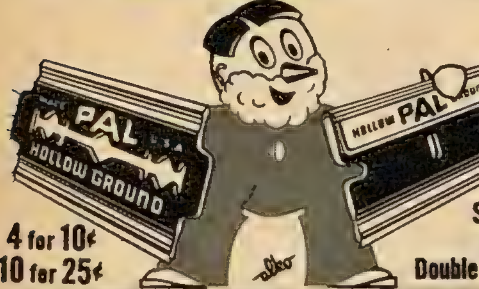

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They bounced together and rebounded. Mike shook his head to clear it and the Bronk hefted up his ruptured pants. Then they lunged at each other, crashing with the headlong force of locomotives, reeled apart and bashed together again. Once, Mike Federoff went down, came up like a geyser and slugged in close. Lacking the Bronk's height he rammed with his battering head, and the Bronk grinned a slap-happy grin and walloped away. Even Jan Kopec, who liked nothing better than to mix it himself, cleaned up his corner in a hurry and stopped to watch.

When it was over, the place looked like an act of God had passed through. Mike Federoff, laid out by a last blast of the Bronk's fist, was bunched like two hundred pounds of sacked feed under a crippled table, and except for the Bronk, Jan Kopec, Joe Kick, and myself, the day shift lay strewn among the wreckage and the night shift sprawled where it had been scattered. Steve was behind his overturned counter.

I looked at the Bronk, who stood grinning that same slap-happy grin with several teeth missing, and at Jan Kopec and Joe Kick. I said, "Couldn't have done better myself, boys. Let's call it a night."

WE took a last look and started for the door. Just as Jan Kopec reached for the knob the door burst open, and in shot Andy Rapsowich from up on the hill.

"The cops! The cops are coming! The cops! The cops! They pull Mrs. Wojehovski for five gallons only, now they come to pull Steve!"

I could hear the grumbling of gears as their car bucked the ruts upgrade to Steve's. I went into action. The time of bruise was past; this called for brains.

"Listen!" I bawled out, whirling around from the door. "The States are coming! Now get this: Nobody here knows how anything happened. Get it? The guy that talks to the cops won't talk again for a long time, not when Jan Kopec and the Bronk get through with him. You understand?"

The Bronk nudged Mike Federoff with his foot. "You hear w'at Alex say?"

"Steve?" I said. "You hear?"

Steve pickled up his face to cry. "Mine joint, mine lifework. It brinks down the cops and gives to the cat mine tongue even."

I wanted only another half second, but before I could warn the Bronk to act dumb, no matter what—can you beat it, telling him to *act* dumb!—the door was kicked open and in walked the States.

I might have known it'd be Sweeney and Slocum—Sweeney with his boiled red face and leathery mouth, and Slocum tough-eyed. They moved in, big and cocksure in their uniforms, and stalked around. Except for the gauge of Sweeney's blood, which turned his face a high-pressure red, no one could have told whether they were surprised to find the place was a shambles. They tested a few bodies with their toes, sized up the place as if they owned it, and still no one had said a word.

Then all of a sudden Sweeney whirled and faced us, standing spraddle-legged over a groaning body.

"All right," he snarled, "who done it?"

Nobody said a word.

Sweeney put his hands on his hips. "*'Who done it?' I said.*"

A few fellows stirred on the floor, but that was all.

"So you want to play it rough," said Sweeney with sarcastic sweetness.

"*Who done it?*" he roared.

Jan Kopec cocked his brow and shrugged a devil-may-care shoulder. "No spik but Polish," he lied with a grin.

I kept my fingers crossed when the States moved on to the Bronk, but he only

(*Continued on page 80*)

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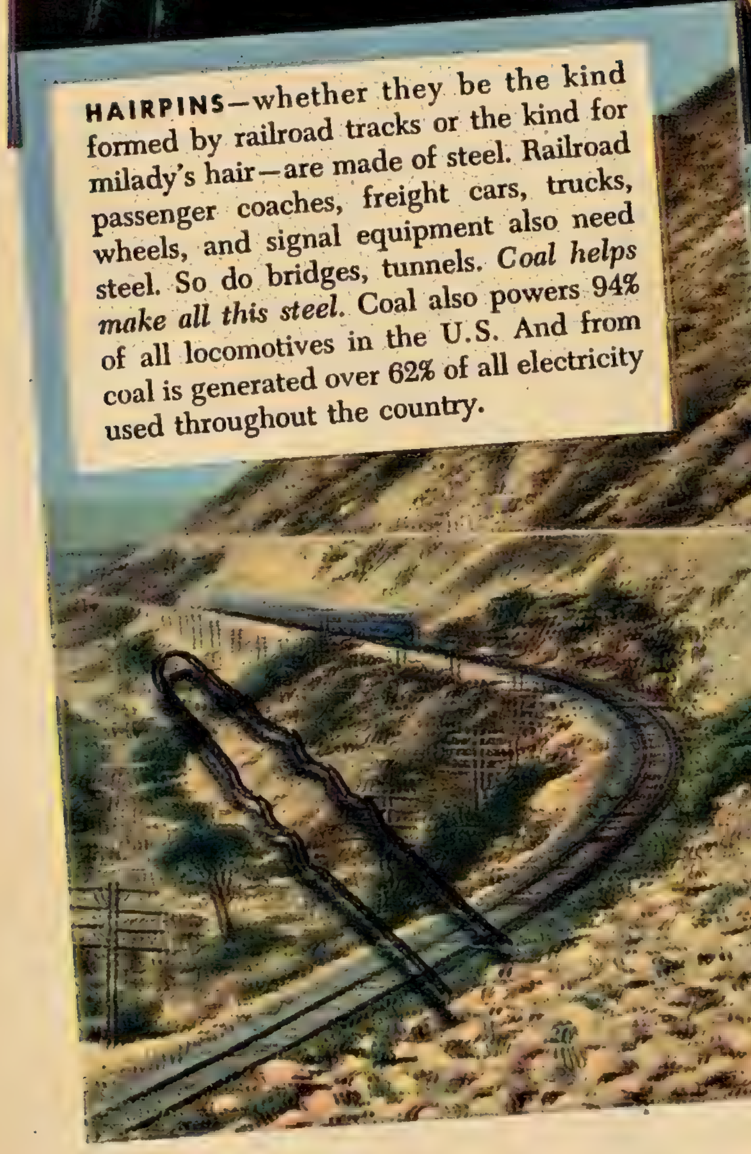

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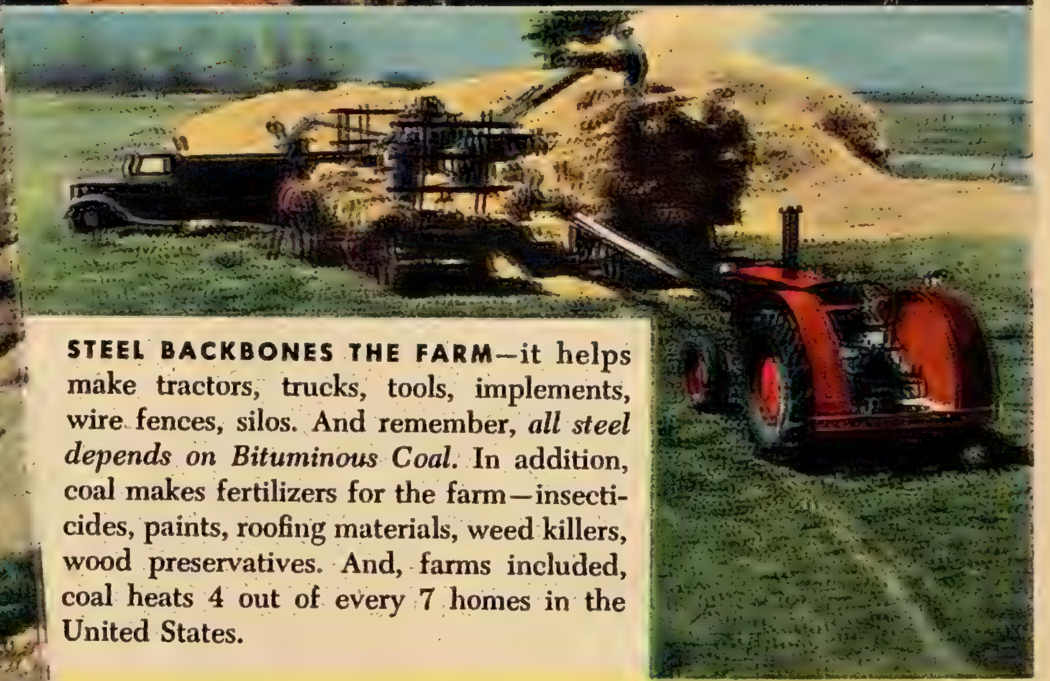

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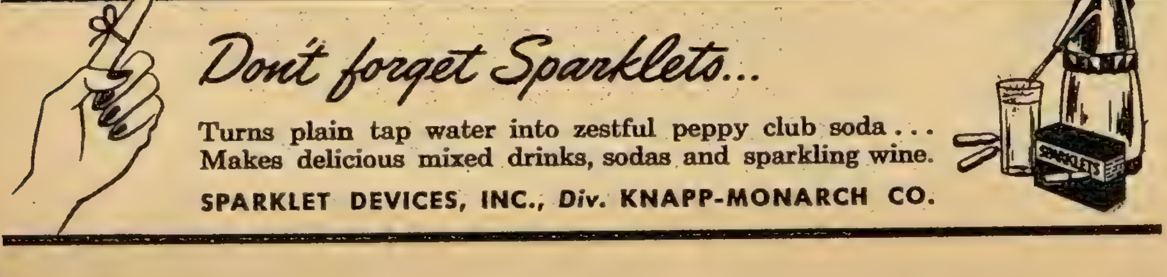

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(Continued from page 78)

stood there blinking in that bewildered way of his. As for Steve—he seemed to scurry standing still when Sweeney questioned him, so scared he could only open his mouth and squeak a little about his luck—"all badt, all badt."

"I'm a stranger here myself," I told Sweeney when he came to me.

Sweeney was getting madder and madder. He tried to rouse some of the fellows on the floor, but those who could talk wouldn't and those who would have, couldn't. I think they'd have arrested the whole shebang if the county clink would have held us, but this was payday Saturday and the coop was probably already loaded.

Steve wept out loud when they told him to come along. They prodded him into his hat and started him toward the door.

Away down inside of me I heaved a sigh. I winked at Jan Kopec and grinned, and for a moment I felt almost sorry for Steve as he moused along, his hat slapped on in a hurry, between two stalwarts of the law.

And at that moment Mike Federoff began to come to. If Mike had been a charge of dynamite at the end of a burning fuse, he couldn't have been deadlier than he was at that moment. I watched, with a feeling that my stomach had been kicked into the slats of my back by a mule, as Mike grunted and groaned and heaved about on the floor, and it seemed to me that everything went in slow motion for a long time. Then Mike reached out and clutched at what he must have thought was a table. It was the Bronk's leg.

The States and Steve had reached the door. Another minute and they'd have gone on through, but Bronk—the big sheep dog of a friend forgetting everything else—butted with two hundred pounds of loyal vigor smack into the back end of the applecart.

With a grab at Mike Federoff he lifted him from the floor and shook him.

"Don't you do nottink!" he bawled. That boardinghouse bellow stopped the States in their tracks. "You hear w'at Alex say?" the Bronk shouted. "You don't tal nottink who's bostin' this joint, or I'm kill you like tonight. So shot op your mouth an' don't tal cops one tink! Remamber!"

The big, dumb, double-headed Polock! He dropped Mike Federoff and turned to me with a happy grin as much as to say, "Is goodt thinking for me thot time—huh, Alex?"

When I looked at Sweeney his mouth was stretched in a mile of hard-boiled bliss from one red slab of his face to the other.

THE Super was a good guy and shorthanded on loaders besides, so he bailed us out of the coop in time for our shifts on Monday. The three of us—Jan Kopec and the Bronk and myself—were together when we stepped into the cage for the man trip into the mines, just as we'd been together in Sweeney's little iron-barred cage ever since he slammed us there. But I was sticking to what I'd told the Bronk when we were sharing county fare together.

I reminded him of it as the cage started to drop. "Remember," I said in a hard-jawed voice, "I'm asking for another buddy as soon as I see McManus. So make up your mind to pull your dumb ones with somebody else. I can't afford you."

In the lights from our safety hats the Bronk's face was woebegone. He stood, hulked in dejection, in the crowded cage. The dumbest palooka ever born, a big, overgrown, bumble-headed lug. I looked at him and looked away. I wondered who he'd tell his "falla from Pantslyvania" story to when I pulled out. I thought about the dogged love he had followed me around with, worshiping me for my gray matter. I had to keep reminding myself why I was mad.

Away up overhead the mouth of the shaft closed over as if someone had slammed down a manhole cover. The cage dropped in the tunneled darkness of the earth.

On bottom, I walked over to a Westinghouse motor and climbed on. The Bronk followed, walking like an old man, and the cars filled with miners bound for facings under the farthest hill of Outcrop. Jan Kopec dropped off at Number 10 Right, and on back we went, the Bronk and I finding our place in the little holed-out dungeon where the coal had been cut away from the wall and left for loading.

We worked in silence broken only by the scrape of our shovels and the clatter of coal striking inside the car.

I knew the Bronk was dreading the rounds of McManus, the section boss, and to tell the truth so was I. I'd cooled down by this time, and had no more idea of asking for another buddy than I had of knocking out the timber props from our ceiling of coal and letting in a whole hill on us. But how anybody could be as dumb as that Polock I'll never know! It made me burn all over again to remember how much he'd cost me Saturday night.

The Bronk stopped shoveling and looked at me. His face was smudged like a big dirty kid's who has played too hard.

"Please, Alex. Don't be madt. I never try to use my head again."

"Scram with that stuff," I growled.

"I pay you back avertink."

"Can it. You'd only do some other dumb—"

IT was then that I heard it. The sound that curls the insides of a man underground. A rumbling grinding sound coming nearer—a runaway motor. Five tons of destruction on the loose.

Shouts echoed along the passageway like the muffled ringing of voices down a deep well. The faraway warnings. Our place was on a curve and the grade for the motor was downhill.

The Bronk and I stood rooted, holding our foolish shovels. There was no place to run. We were caught in the trapped darkness of the underground.

In the pale light from my lamp I could see how the sweat stood out on the Bronk's face, sliding down the oily black of coal smudge, and I could feel cold perspiration leaking down my ribs as the roar increased.

Then the black hulk filled the dimly-lighted tunnel with hurtling darkness and the noise of death. For an instant the motor swayed on the curve and teetered idiotically, then, righting itself, plunged with blunt sleek blindness from the tracks, knocking the timber props like tenpins from under the ceiling. Crashing into loose coal, it headed straight for the facing.

I saw the Bronk lunge to throw me from its path. The motor grazed him and plunged on past, driving its wedge of coal and props directly toward me.

The sound of breakage, the splitting and grinding, seemed to come from my insides.

I was buried from the waist down, pinned back against the fissure by debris. Against this the motor had come to a stop with its front wheels almost directly over me, as though it had reared and pawed at the wreckage, trying to get to me.

Only a second had passed. I saw the Bronk pick himself up just as the ceiling started to give. The Bronk heard it, too. He jumped up, and the avalanche of slate crashed over the motor, wedging it tight.

"Bronk," I panted. "Bronk—"

He ran toward the passageway, calling back as he ran, "I gat a rail bar, Alex."

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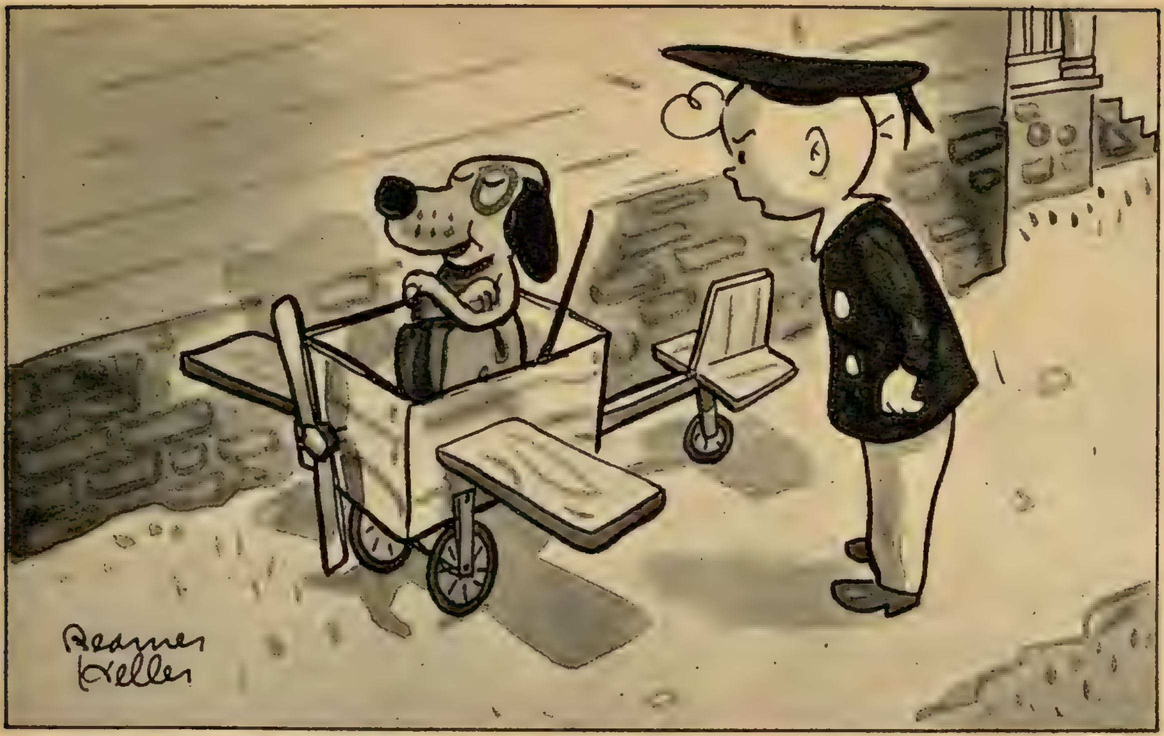

I heard the drum of other feet, and Pete Kopsac and six or seven other men ran into our place. I watched in numbness as they tore at the slate, flinging it slab by slab from the motor.

The men worked frantically, cursing and grunting as they clawed at the slate with hands that bled. I could feel the pain jabbing through my lower body as they pulled at the timber props. While Pete Kopsac and Scotch McCrie clawed at the weight that pinned me, the others ran for new timber, out into the passageway and back with their lights bobbing. The monolith cracked overhead and loosed itself in avalanches of pelting slate, a whole hill sagging in on us. The men braced the cracks, five men holding up the earth as it shifted its sinking weight, following the cracks. Until the Bronk came running with a rail bar.

Then the Bronk did a thing no other man in all the bituminous fields of West Virginia could have done. As the men darted in and out beneath the ceiling and braced it with props, the Bronk laid a rail bar beneath the axle of the motor, and putting his great strength to the weight that pinned me, lifted the motor so slowly it was a tableau of muscles strained to their utmost for an inch gained, for a weight lifted an inch from the pinned body of a man.

Slowly he labored, his shoulder beneath the rail bar forcing the motor upward, the wheels of the motor lifting so slowly they seemed not to lift at all. Then, with the weight of the motor on the rail bar resting on his shoulder and his great strength braced to hold the weight, he held the motor aloft while the men pulled me out, just before the ceiling fell.

IN the company first-aid station the first thing I saw when I opened my eyes was the Bronk. His face was corrugated with crying, and tears trickled down the creases and splashed off his nose.

"Alex," he said. "Alex," he wept. "Alex." He put out a big smudged timorous hand and touched me. "You're all bost op."

I grinned him a wobbly one. "Hell, who cares?"

He tried to smile. "You're madt, Alex?"

"Scram with that stuff," I growled. It hurt clear down to my toes. "How could I be mad after what you did?" I grinned at him. "That was sure something, Polock. That was sure something."

He brightened. "Sure tink?"

"Sure thing."

He shifted to the other foot.

"Goodt thinkink, too?"

"Good thinking!" I said. "Polock," I said, "when it comes to the big ones, you think better than I do—a helluva whole lot better."

I caught the look in his eye, and groaned and prepared myself for the future. I could tell by the way he beamed from one broad cheekbone to the other what story I'd be hearing every day and twice on Sunday, and it wouldn't be "falla come from Pantslyvania . . ."

THE END

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TAILOR-MADE VEGETABLES

Continued from Page 35

duced in '32. Nobody thought Pritchard would amount to much because it produced its tomatoes all at once in a very short time. In fact, scientists warned growers against it: "It will glut canneries." Pritchard fooled them all. Canners were delighted with it, for it gave them a chance to pick the fields all at once.

This spring you should be able to share in the bean bonus. There's Improved Commodore snap bean, a true bush form of your old favorite Kentucky Wonder pole bean. There's Florida Belle snap bean, resistant to foliage diseases of the South and a time-saver in canning, as all the plants in a field produce at once, can be picked at the same time. And there's Pioneer, the only snap bean that won't get curly-top disease, prevalent in Oregon, Washington, and the near-by Rockies.

If it's a bush Lima you want, try the top winner of the 1945 All-America trials: Fordhook 242. It sets its pods even in hot dry weather, gives you 25 per cent more high-quality beans than any other bush Lima. For an earlier large-seeded bean, plant Early Market, bronze winner of the '45 trials and a prolific producer.

Don't get the idea from all this that it's easy to produce new vegetables. Far from it. These are the pick of scores of newcomers. For every one that reaches you, thousands have been discarded. Before Pan-America was found, for example, 79,999 plants were thrown away.

Even when a breeder thinks he has perfected a plant for your garden, he may find his entry crossed out in the All-America selections. Each year seedsmen run off a gigantic vegetable elimination tournament. Every spring some eighty new kinds are entered in these trials. Seventeen judges give every contestant a thorough going over, and turn thumbs down on every one that isn't plainly better than the current favorites.

BUT year after year new champs come along as hybridizers push forward. Now they are hard at work breeding vitamins and minerals into your vegetables.

This season you can plant the first of the lot, two cabbages, Huguenot and Madison, each with twice as much vitamin C as oranges. Dr. Charles Poole, Department of Agriculture researcher in Charleston, South Carolina, developed them. Now he is trying to put vitamins into beans, peas, sweet corn, tomatoes, and carrots, running off sometimes as many as 2,500 vitamin tests a day in his laboratories.

Sweet potatoes with more carotene, the eye vitamin, are on the way, too. One has already been developed, but it's an anemic-looking potato, not fit for your table. It's a step in the right direction, though. And scientists think by 1949 they will get what they're after.

But that's for tomorrow. Here, today, is a midget watermelon for Northerners. Dr. A. F. Yeager of the New Hampshire Experiment Station has developed a melon Yankees can raise in their own back yards. He crossed the two swiftest growing melons of the South and came up with one that grows so fast it can ripen even in Maine's brief summer. Plant it in June and you can eat it in August. It's sweet and juicy, though only six inches over-all.

You know Jerusalem cherry, the pot plant with red berries? It's a beauty, but a poisonous beauty to children who eat its fruit. To ward off that danger, Dr. Yeager developed a tomato pot plant, a handsome thing. But Fate tossed in a bonus he never expected: a small tomato so delicious the Tiny Tim rates garden space, too. It's yours this spring for the first time.

There's a new bush pumpkin, too, bred expressly for your Victory garden. It won't sprawl all over the lot, strangling carrots and beans, like vine pumpkins. Yet it produces fruit every bit as good, ripens unusually early, bears two to three pumpkins on every bush. Last spring the first seeds of Cheyenne Bush went to growers. This year there's seed for you.

And here's another space saver, a Golden Midget corn so small it will grow in a tub on your rooftop. With plants only six inches apart in rows eighteen inches apart, it yields three to five ears to every stalk. Flavorful and sweet, most ears are less than five inches long, a good fit for your hands. A New England farmer named Mason developed this corn, all because he found White Midget corn ideal for his toy-sized cornfield but missed the sweet flavor of Golden Bantam. He worked seven years before he brought it off. Introduced to a few gardeners last year, the Golden Midget is now ready for market.

WHETHER you live in the West or East, there's a new cantaloupe for you. If you're a Westerner, you'll be interested in two new melons that can stand up to that fatal powdery mildew. No names to them yet, but you can order them by number, Cantaloupes Nos. 6 and 7. For Easterners, it's the Iroquois, a deep orange oval cantaloupe that resists fusarium wilt.

Look forward next year to the first strawberry ever developed exclusively for home gardeners by the Bureau of Plant Industry. As everybody knows, there are likely to be a good many sour berries in a dishful. Dr. George Darrow has figures on it: The Fairfax, tops in flavor up to now, gives you seventy sweet berries in every 100. The new berry, still not christened, gives 95 to each 100. What's more, it ripens earlier, lengthening your shortcake time, and produces more berries to a plant than most.

But until it's ready, look into Fairpeak, the highest flavored late variety, introduced a year ago in limited quantity. Sweet and lush, Fairpeak yields twice as much vitamin C as oranges, keeps half its vitamins even when canned.

Here are some more of tomorrow's tempters: blueberries big as quarters, and peaches for people with stomach trouble. Down in the orchards of Rutgers University, New Jersey, twenty-seven different strains of peaches, ripening at different times, are already growing. Bred in cooperation with a Trenton physician, the peaches have so little acid that even people with gastric ulcers can eat them without harm.

Another some-day item is a thornless blackberry. John C. Bowen of Menlo Park, California, found the freak bush in a creek-bed thicket, promptly patented it. Its fruit is said to taste like a cross between blackberry and raspberry.

You wouldn't think it possible to cross a watermelon and a cantaloupe, would you? It isn't now. But it may be some day. Dr. Albert F. Blakeslee of Smith College has found a way to raise "impossible hybrids." By a plant Caesarean operation he can save the tiny embryos that start to form and then die in the mother plant when some species are crossed. Once rescued, they grow like incubator babies in glass dishes filled with a synthetic diet containing powdered-milk extract.

So keep your eyes open for even stranger fruits and vegetables. Hybridizers are hard at work and almost anything good can happen.

THE END

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So don't pay for a whole seat, because you'll only use the edge of it!

• • •

And incidentally, if anyone should run up and ask you who ran away with the motion picture honors in 1944, just say:

"Paramount Pictures"

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

BY EVE STANLEY

Empress Tallulah goes democratic with naïve young Lieutenant William Eythe.

A ROYAL SCANDAL

(Twentieth Century-Fox) Tallulah Bankhead, Charles Coburn, Anne Baxter, William Eythe

RUSSIA'S redoubtable Catherine the Great comes in for some rollicking modern ribbing here in a luxurious whipped-cream comedy. Twentieth Century-Fox has furbished up regal Old Russia within an inch of its life, ensconced trombone-voiced Tallulah Bankhead in the royal bedchamber, and proceeded to kid the daylights out of the whole works.

Empress Tallulah's hoarsely rampant femininity, decked out fit to kill, lends itself as well to an imperious "Shut up!" as to the heavy-lidded looks she casts toward an eager young lieutenant (William Eythe). His chief claim to distinction is the capacity for riding horseback three days and nights without getting tired—but that's enough for Her Majesty, who promptly dresses him up in a white uniform (apparently pasted on) and makes him a colonel in a few easy stages. This so inspires the idealistic youth that he gallantly smashes a whole champagne bottle instead of his glass. Meanwhile the Empress eyes that uniform and disposes of his ideas for improving the peasants by letting him write out all the useless edicts he wants in his spare time. "After all," she agrees cheerfully, "there's nothing like a good peasant."

Other aspects of this hilariously corrupt court are personified by Charles Coburn as a suave embezzling chancellor (royally admonished to "take it easy"), a covey of plotting generals, and a flowery French ambassador (Vincent Price). There's also a spirited young lady in waiting (Anne Baxter) who had dibs on the lieutenant in the first place and matches tantrums with Her Majesty.

Skimming along at top speed on a scenario sparkling and slick as a ski slide, this gay travesty achieves the quality of first-rate satire without ever going an inch below the surface.

Wily Chancellor Charles Coburn understands why Anne Baxter's jealous of the Empress.

IT'S A PLEASURE

(International Pictures—RKO) Sonja Henie, Michael O'Shea, Bill Johnson, Marie McDonald

SONJA HENIE'S unchallenged prowess on skates is impressed upon all beholders here in a riot of color fit to frazzle the optic nerve. Trundling awkwardly along in the wake of a papier-mâché story, the production numbers, due to the Henie grace and elegant settings, are gorgeous and diverting. The vehicle itself tries unsuccessfully to hide behind some snazzy clothes and super interior decoration.

Concerned with an incredible foursome of theatrical folk, the tale might better have allowed even more room for skating. As it is, Marie McDonald is left to fill in by registering Menace in a leopard-skin vest, while her husband (Bill Johnson) stands around looking foolish. Michael O'Shea plays one furious game of hockey, then relapses into drink. Luckily there's always an ice show going on some place, where Sonja performs her customary marvels, with some added color extravaganzas in the way of bubbles and streamers of light and multiple-shot effects. Her small clean-cut little figure, set off by the briefest of jeweled costumes, whirls through its flawless glides and pirouettes, and spins into weird double-faced patterns of motion that may easily go to your head. For contrast, she trips through a pleasantly undistinguished terpsichorean interlude with assistant producer Don Loper. But the best number is that sure-fire Latin Tico-Tico, with plenty of rhythm, green ice, chorus girls, and Henie.

SPECIAL MENTION

A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN (20th Cent.-Fox). Peggy Garner, Dorothy McGuire, James Dunn.
COLONEL BLIMP (Eagle Lion-U. A.). Anton Walbrook, Roger Livesey, Deborah Kerr.
OBJECTIVE BURMA (Warner Bros.). Errol Flynn, Henry Hull, all-male cast.
THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE (RKO). Dorothy McGuire, Robert Young, Herbert Marshall.
THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY (M-G-M). George Sanders, Hurd Hatfield.
THE THREE CABALLEROS (Walt Disney-RKO). Donald Duck, Joe Carioca, Panchito.

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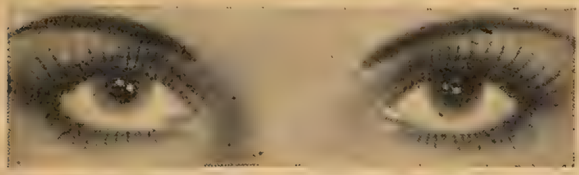

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TWO LIKABLE LADS LOADED WITH LAUGHS

Continued from Page 25

shoes, and soon afterward, ditching their erstwhile colleagues, "Two Likable Lads Loaded with Laughs" debuted on the Pantages vaudeville time.

Hell didn't exactly pop. Olsen sang Hello, Frisco, Hello! into an unconnected phone with dangling cord (*laugh*), while Johnson played. Then Olsen sat on Johnson's lap, and did a pre-Charlie McCarthy ventriloquist routine, imitating a telephone busy signal during it. They secretly hoped to be concert artists eventually, Olsen playing the violin.

One day in Toledo a tardy prop man rushed onstage and placed the rail and gabboon by the bar at which the likable lads were doing a boozy song routine. Olsen invited the prop man to join the singing of Sweet Adeline. This business got such an ovation, it went into the act.

From then on, art faded and psychopathology set in. The boys kicked each other in the rear during a sad song, then fell to disrobing while singing Back Home in Tennessee—Without a Shirt! One day while some thrush-throated colleagues were laboriously intoning a sober song entitled Rollin' Stones, the boys struggled onstage rolling a huge papier-mâché boulder. In time, all the world became a stooge and O. & J. became known as the Lepers of Vaudeville. Prop men refused to make fools of themselves; other acts wouldn't book on the same bill. Colleagues used to say: "We do all the work, and Olsen and Johnson get all the money." (This is still true. While 100-odd stooges go berserk around them, the O. & J. stage technique is to remain absolutely motionless, except for taking bows.) So the lads began hiring their own talent, until they carried an entire unit of their own to interfere with.

Though they were splitting about $3,000 a week in the '20s, New York took them coolly. They would drive the two blocks from the Astor Hotel to the Palace Theater in a battered 1912 Hupmobile and dismount grandly on a ragged red carpet flung out by their chauffeur, but the Palace guard ignored their antics. Outside New York, folks loved their bedlam.

WHEN vaudeville died, they played one-night stands, did five and six shows a day in movie houses. When the film was good, they gave a "short version" so the house could be emptied more frequently; a long version if the picture was a dog. They played hundreds of Elk jubilees and never refused a benefit.

In 1937, Buckeye, Arizona, invited them and their dizzy unit down to gag up the annual Buckeye Cotton Carnival called Helzapoppin', with one "l." They went, conquered, and came away with a title for their act. A year later Johnson (the outdoors man) was on a fishing trip in the Midwest. Ole (the playboy executive) called up, long distance. "How would you like to play New York?" he asked.

"I hate New York."

"It's for a musical. So much of the gross and eight shows a week!"

"Eight shows a week?" Chic shouted. "Take it!"

It seems that Lee Shubert had caught Helzapoppin' at a Philadelphia movie house and wanted to assault New York with it.

Tacking a makeshift second act to the old unit show, adding an "l" to the title, and a battered-looking chorus, the bedlam boys again invaded New York. Secretly they figured on a week's run, a small loss

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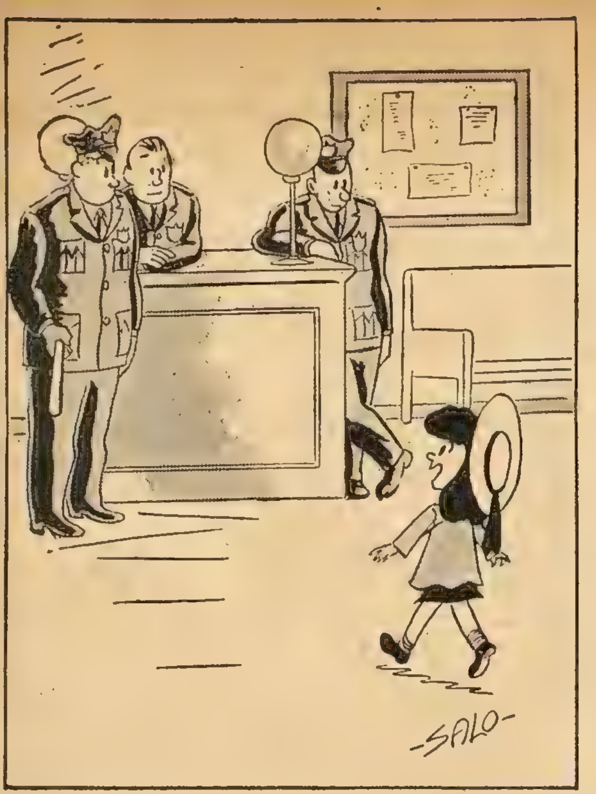

"Well, here I am lost again—I'll take a strawberry ice cream soda this time."

to the pocketbook—the show cost $15,000 to mount—and back to the old grind of the friendly sticks at a few thousand per week.

Opening at the Forty-sixth Street Theater on September 22, 1938, their dreams almost came true. One critic wrote, "Hellzapoppin' is out of bounds, out of range, and out of some asylum. It is vulgar and anesthetic." Mr. Richard Watts of the Herald Tribune found it a messy bore; someone else prophesied it would soon be Hellzafloppin', and that the boys wouldn't be around long enough to send out their laundry. Only Walter Winchell liked it. So, oddly enough, did the audience.

The first week, Hellzapoppin' drew a dismal $19,000. Then it began to climb. Winchell ballyhooed it, people told you about the bean barrage, how a woman (Mrs. Johnson) ran up and down the aisles looking for her lost Oscar, how a duck in full flight laid an egg over the audience, and the egg parachuted down.

Cocktails, athletes, trains, and babies were named for Hellzapoppin'; and C. C. N. Y. solemnly conferred Drs. of H_2O NUTS 2U on its perpetrators, with background music supplied by the three-piece string ensemble that played the chamber music in the Winter Garden men's room during intermissions. Running a madhouse had become a big business, not to mention a national vogue.

Three companies toured the show, then it became a movie. In 1941, Sons o' Fun, its noisy brat, began beating out Broadway's brains. It ran 742 performances and contained the usual screwballistics along with some exhumed vaudeville and dancing in the aisles. The scenery, if not the jokes, was cleaner than Hellz'; and as bank rolls and the boys' bellies swelled, so did costs. "Sons" took $165,000 to mount, and its chorines were all under fifty. The present hollerbaloo, L. R. O., cost more than $300,000, has a weekly nut of $36,000.

BOWING to the public's present craving for beauty, Olsen had larded the general din with young chorus gals, delicate background tints, and genuine Russian ballets by Kansas ballerinas.

As for their own dinanities, for the first time in their lives the boys hired a writer to help them on L. R. O., and started with a script. It called for $25,000 worth of screwy props, including a machine generating 250 pounds of air pressure, to blow O. & J. through a brick wall; a tree that walks; a portrait of F. L R. which speaks

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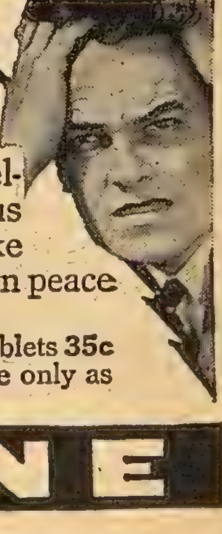

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and says, "Again and again and again!"; a telephone that squirts whisky, soda, milk, and coffee into Mr. Johnson's moony jowls; a Union Pacific locomotive; and a bubble bath big enough to contain a blonde and a hidden gent. (When someone wonders where all the bubbles come from, he pops up and says, "Busy little rascal—ain't I?")

Props made up and rejected because they didn't get belly laughs included two cannons capable of shooting life-sized dummies from stage to balcony; a very nude statue (female) labeled "Bundles for Buddies" for a soldier to tote across stage; and a spittoon from which pops a flag when spat into. The boys also had hoped the locomotive, which pulls a "Ghost Train," would not only roar fearfully, as it does out at the audience, but would continue on and vanish in thin air. Science, it seems, has its limitations. They also dreamed of a gradually lowering curtain at the theater entrance under which all late-comers would have to crawl to get in; and a few elevator orchestra seats to which attendants would strap the occupants, as in a plane—the seats thereafter taking off to a twelve-foot ceiling. For a California number they wanted not only to blackout the theater with a fog, but to put in motors to shake the seats, earthquake style, while it snowed from above. Then, when you exited from L. R. O., they wanted you to go through a lobby rainstorm.

The Fire Department of New York frowned on most of these ideas, while the Shuberts feared someone might have a heart attack during the quake.

EVEN so, to operate L. R. O.'s other 1,000-odd devices and keep its intricate timing properly split requires a large crew, headed by the high-salaried Denny Moore. Like a dispatcher at Grand Central Station, Denny runs everything from a control box: a public-address speaker hooked up to all parts of the house. Occasionally things go wrong, as when the stout Johnson got himself locked into a trunk during a magic act by accident, and they had a time getting him out. Once a trap door opened unexpectedly during a number, and a chorus gal shot from sight, having hysterics as she went. These impromptu bits blend gracefully into the general hysteria.

Olsen & Johnson do not fight to keep their names out of the papers. They're terribly proud of how they sent the San Francisco critics pregnant rabbits a while back; and of how they once gifted the nation's radio critics with live monkeys at Christmas.

Since every jerk has its equal and opposite reaction, the boys get pranked in return. Hundreds of pigs, chickens, goats, lion cubs, a bull calf, a garter snake or two, and dozens of skunks have been sent them. These have found their way to zoos or Johnson's farm. The number of hams they've got with their faces engraved thereon is incalculable. Fred Allen, cognizant of the well-known Shubert frugality, returned the bean with which he'd been hit at Hellzapoppin', while another customer sent them some beans he'd raised from ones he'd collected at the same show. One day a large box arrived containing an arm, with a note explaining the sender was giving his right arm for a seat to L. R. O. Someone else once offered to exchange a Stock Exchange seat for one to Hellzapoppin'!

Both Olsen & Johnson are happily married and grandfathers, and both families are either in the act or plan to be. Ole's brother Steve understudies him; Mrs. Johnson runs through the aisles screaming; and before the Army claimed him, Ole's son, J. C., played dozens of stooges,

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loaded guns, made candid shots of the audience, wrote gags and was offstage noises. "I went to U. S. C. for four years," J. C. says, "to be an offstage shot for my dad!"

Unofficial family members are Elmer Musco and Bernice Edlund. Musco, a slim colored chap, is valet, cook, houseman, chauffeur, and bodyguard to Olsen, and responsible for getting Olsen places only reasonably late. He never sleeps, and—alas!—seems infected with the Virus. I heard him answer the phone in the fantastic dressing room. "Good afternoon laffing room only ha ha ha," he chanted. "Standing room only ha ha ha!"

Officially company secretary, Miss Edlund's task is to keep Olsen & Johnson in contact with reality. A tall calm Swedish beauty from California, Bee answers mail, keeps books, sends out laundry and even does it. She gets rooms and tickets for the boys' friends and for their families' friends. She keeps Olsen straight on the forty to fifty dressing-room callers, gets rid of touches and talent, is emergency understudy, and crawls into the orchestra pit when an Eddie Cantor comes to see the show, to tell the leader to play If You Knew Susie.

AFTER L. R. O. closes, the boys will make a movie. They've made about twelve so far, See My Lawyer being their latest spasm. Then they'll either produce Hellzapoppin', Jr., a monster madhouse filled with swimming pools, ice skaters, elephants, and artillery fire, and designed to fit into big arenas like Madison Square Garden—or they may go abroad. There are bogus Olsen & Johnsons everywhere who buy their material and do reasonable facsimiles of them, but the boys want to give the world a dose of the real thing. They have a picture showing Anthony Eden getting slapped in the aristocratic teeth at Sons o' Fun with a pair of pink panties—and liking it, so they think they can get into England.

Some years ago in Australia they also made friends with the Duke and Duchess of York—now King and Queen. They'd been invited to a brawl so stiff and formal when the boys arrived you could have cut it with a place card. Hastily they organized a Goofy Grand March, an Elks' favorite, everybody changing coats when the music stopped. In no time, generals were wearing crowns and duchesses had on cutaway coats, and the joint was a royal wreck!

They also want to produce a Negro Hellzapoppin', and a show called Jerks Berserk on their own. It will contain every nut act extant. Olsen also wants to do their "autobugography," if he can find the right ghost writer and enough tin. It's to be issued in a sort of sardine-can-with-key, contain crosswords if you get bored, and aspirins should it give you a headache.

Meanwhile they have their eyes on a gadget: an Abbott and Costello prop they saw in Hollywood last summer. It's a sofa with a concealed car motor and room for a hidden chauffeur (Elmer). It can be driven at high speeds. Dave Murray tried to buy it as a town car for his masters. He saw them driving to work each day in lounging robes throughout New York traffic, smoking cigars and reading their papers—a blonde lolling between them reading a book—two old inseparable cronies who've never had a contract between them and who share and share alike (with friends). Abbott and Costello, no fools themselves, refused to sell. But Olsen & Johnson will not be denied. Henry Ford has heard about it and has his drawing board out.

THE END

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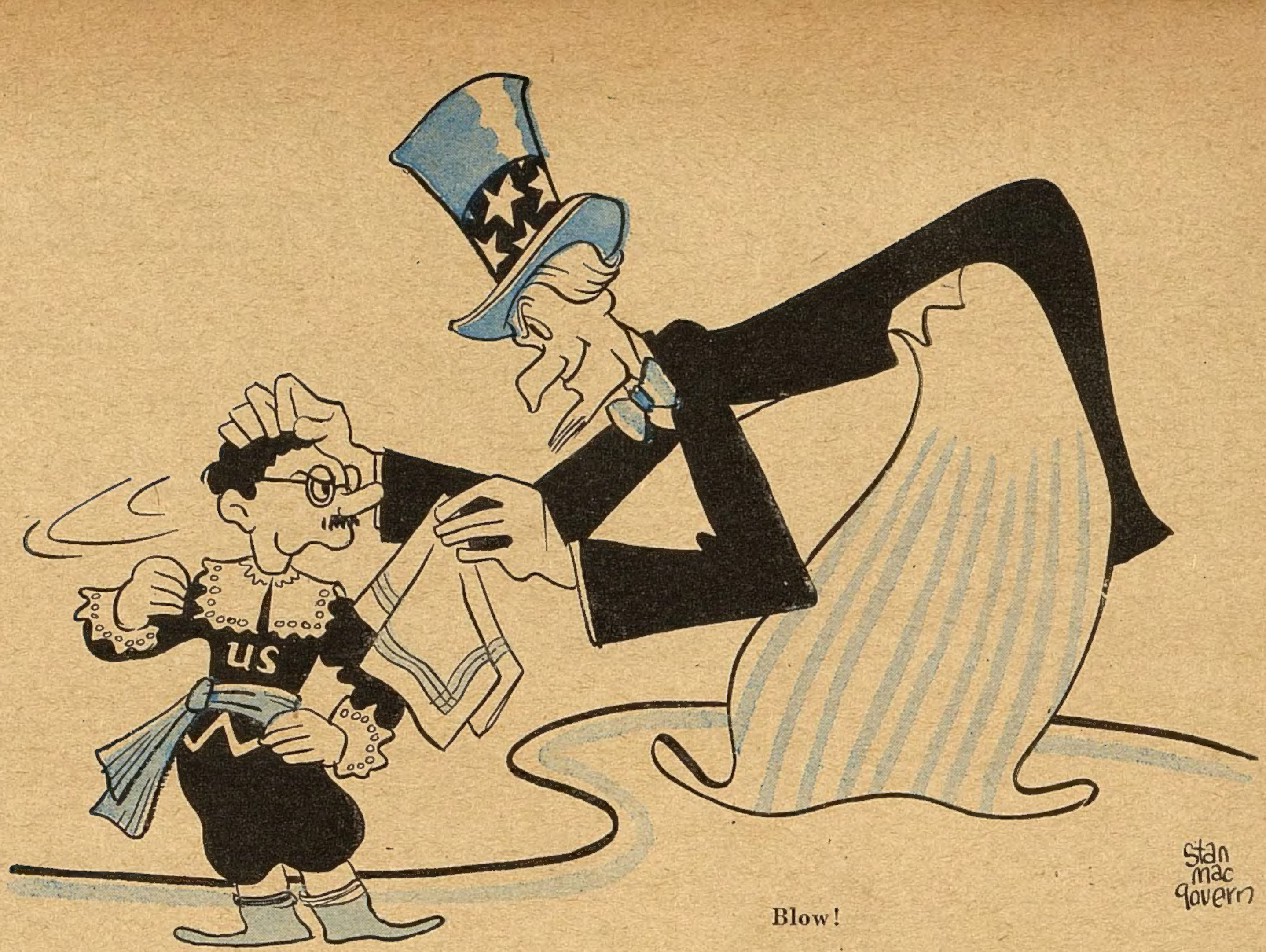


Blow!

ARE WE MEN OR MORONS?

PROBABLY the most misleading idea ever presented to the American people is the theory that by governmental action we can protect ourselves against nearly all the hazards of life. Nearly everyone with a pet scheme to improve the lot of the average citizen runs to Washington and yells for a law so that the public may be bettered, whether it wants to be or not.

There are certain hazards of existence which are proper areas for governmental action. But obviously government cannot keep us all wrapped in cotton wool and shielded from harm throughout our entire lives. When it comes to looking out for us as individuals, the government can and should concern itself with hygiene and sanitation, with the organized conquest of disease, the lowering of infant mortality, the care of the aged and helpless, and the fostering of opportunities for us to work and make a living.

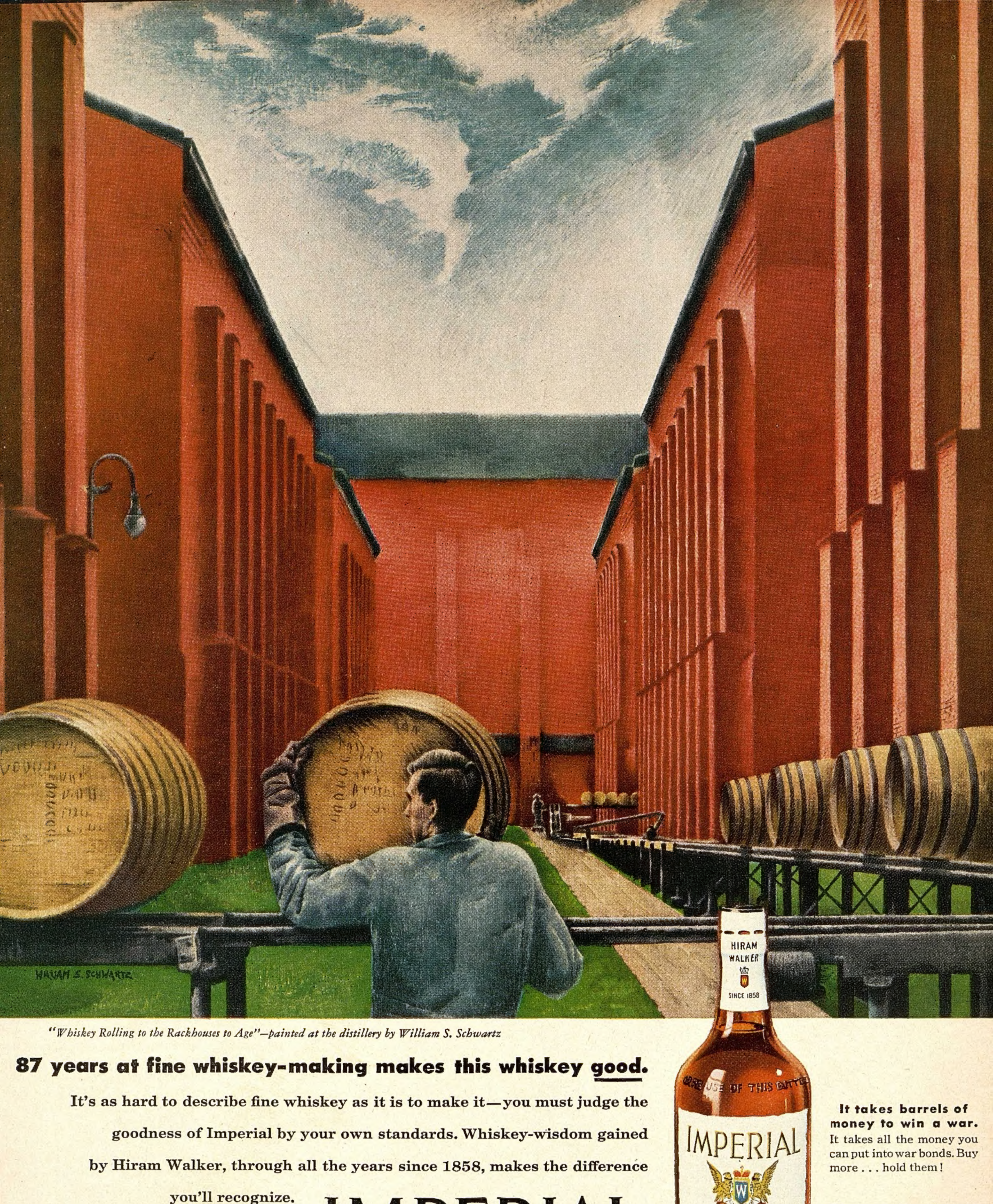
To meet other hazards, the government should only provide rules under which the weak and the unwary may be protected from the strong and shrewd. However, these rules, if they are not to become oppressive on all of us, must be essentially simple and uncomplicated. Enforcement of them must be left to the courts and not vested in an ever-expanding bureaucracy.

It is a fallacy to suppose that in any country worth living in, the government can see to it that no citizen is ever sold an inferior can of soup or tube of tooth paste. There are those who advocate the extension of government's functions into such fields of endeavor. While it might be possible for Americans to live under such a system, it would not be pleasant. A mass of government employees would then have their noses in practically every transaction that takes place, a practice that would irk the citizenry no end, as we have discovered during the last few years under wartime controls.

Furthermore, it is doubtful if the average citizen would have as much confidence in a government stamp of approval as he has in a manufacturer's trade-mark. Most American manufacturers are extremely proud of their products and built acceptance for them under brand names by satisfying users over a long period of years. They can be depended upon to give the customer his money's worth in quality and satisfaction without the benefit of governmental approval. The fly-by-night manufacturer who attempts to foist phony products on the country soon goes out of business anyway.

It is important that the American people realize that the "freedom from want" contained in the Four Freedoms is a somewhat different thing from freedom from "wants." We never have been and never will be free from wants. We like the kind of country in which we can satisfy our wants according to our own ability and enterprise. We would not like a country in which we were all free from want but had no opportunity to acquire the things above a bare subsistence which make American life so worth living. The cushions which some of our heavy-duty thinkers seek to provide against all life's hazards will require that we give up much of the freedom of choice and freedom of accomplishment which make up freedom in America. We'd sooner do without them and take our chances.

Paul Hunter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